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THE SOUTHERN FREEDOM MOVEMENT IN PERSPECTIVE

ANNE BRADEN

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CONTENTS | VOLUME SEVENTEEN NUMBER THREE JULY-AUG. 1965

THE SOUTHERN FREEDOM MOVEMENT IN PERSPECTIVE

by Anne Braden

Introduction 1
1. The Early Seeds of Freedom 6
2. The New Era: 1955-56 16
3. The Student Revolt: 1960-61 24
4. Mobilization at the Grass Roots: 1961-62 35
5. Black and White Together? 61
6. Nonviolence: Pacifier or Power? 74
7. The Unanswered Questions 85

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NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

We are pleased to reintroduce to our readers with this issue, Anne Braden, author of the MR Press book, *The Wall Between*, which tells the incredible story of the witch-hunt that ensued when Anne and Carl Braden bought a house in a white section of Louisville and turned it over to Negro friends. The late Eleanor Roosevelt described the book as "a most remarkable story" by a woman of courage and extraordinary objectivity. Mrs. Braden is presently the editor of the *Southern Patriot*, official organ of the Southern Conference Educational Fund, and is also, along with her husband, a field secretary for that organization.

The following communication from Anne Braden came in the mail the other day:

> It occurred to me to wonder whether MR might try to get contributions from friends to circulate copies of this issue in the South. There are all kinds of opportunities for distribution—at conferences and on Southern campuses. Students everywhere gobble up any and all literature like locusts coming through. The problem is finding the money to buy the extra copies.

Readers who would like to help circulate this issue among Southern students—and incidentally help introduce MR to a largely new audience,

(*continued on inside back cover*)

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INTRODUCTION

In January of this year, one of the editors of MONTHLY REVIEW asked me what was happening in the Southern freedom movement. What, he asked, had it accomplished, what were its long-range objectives, where did it appear to be going?

This article is an attempt to deal with these questions.

It is not really an attempt to answer them. I have been active in the movement in the South for the past 17 years, but I don't know the answers to all these questions—and I'm not sure anyone else in the movement does either.

Fundamentally, I think, the Southern movement is now groping and searching. About a year ago it came to the end of an era, for one phase of the battle—the struggle for desegregation of public accommodations—was essentially won. The official victory came with passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, but the end was clearly in sight even earlier. This does not mean that there are not still today, in some parts of the South, lunch counters, restaurants, theaters, and other public accommodations that bar Negroes. There are certainly some and, in the rural areas and small towns, many. But in major cities throughout the region and even in smaller communities in many sections, major public facilities are now open.

Yet, despite this victory—to the surprise of some but as many had expected—life in the South has not really changed very much either for the Negro or for the white. Schools are still basically segregated, jobs are getting harder than ever to find, and if anything housing is becoming more segregated. "The South is getting more like the North every day, and that's not good," said one civil rights worker. He meant that segregation by law is passing, but segregation in fact is increasing.

Most of the major civil rights organizations are now concentrating their work in what is called the Black Belt—those 100 or more counties stretched across the Deep South, mostly rural, where Negroes are in the majority or near-majority. This is the area where oppression of the Negro has been most open and brutal, where he has traditionally been denied the vote as well as every dignity of citizenship. The battle

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in these areas now is for the vote, and it is a crucial battle because the Black Belt holds great potential of political power.

This is the battle that produced the great upsurge around Selma, Alabama, this winter and spring. The events there were historic because they aroused the nation as nothing in the freedom movement had done before and brought the greatest outpouring of support for the Negro's fight against oppression that has yet been seen.

There will be more Selmas, because extreme racists are still in control in large sections of the Black Belt; and when they use terror to stop the Negro drive to freedom, there will be more crises. It is important that people in the rest of the country continue to respond as they did to Selma; in fact, it is important that some way be found to keep the concern of the nation active between the times that such campaigns boil to the front pages. For these areas are still very much like police states, and history seems to show that police states can be broken only if the people in them have help from the outside.

On the other hand, it should be remembered that even if the battle of all the Selmas is won, as it will be—even when the Negro wins the vote everywhere in the South and the violent elements are brought under control of the moderates—the question of making freedom real will still remain.

For what do you do after Sheriff Jim Clark stops clubbing people and the registrars agree to register them, and the police let them walk unmolested on the highways—yet Negroes still can't get a decent job in Selma? That is what has happened at the scenes of earlier violence in the South. And what do you do if white politicians who make moderate statements get elected to office instead of those who shout racist slogans, and even some Negroes get elected too—but the majority of Negroes still live in slums and have no hope of getting out? This too has happened at the centers of earlier campaigns against racism.

What about places like Nashville, where there has not been a demonstration in more than a year, where the restaurants and hotels are open to all comers—but where thousands of Negroes still live in ghettos and many of them in slums. What about places like Memphis where Negro voter registration is among the highest in the South, but where segregation in housing and schools is increasing all the time? Or places like Albany, Georgia, where Negroes aren't marching in the streets anymore, as they did when this town shook the world in 1962, but where unemployment among Negroes is worse than it has ever been?

Up until now, the struggle of the Negro in the South has been essentially a struggle for symbols. This was important, and it probably

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had to come first, because with the symbol went human dignity. The cry that has filled the Southern countryside has been "Freedom Now!" Many who shouted it could not have told you exactly what they meant by it—not because they didn't know what they were struggling for, but because it was a concept too big to put into words. Freedom—an end to all that was wrong—an end to oppression—an end to second-class citizenship—an end to terror. Freedom—not only an end, but a beginning too—a new world where things are different, where people are different, the promised land, not in some next world, but *Now*. Freedom in the abstract, too big to articulate, but something a person feels the meaning of in his guts; and people, overcoming the fears of centuries, fought for it, and were willing to go to jail and die for it. And because it was too big to comprehend in specifics, it had to be looked for in symbols.

Even something like Alabama's giant march for the vote on U.S. Highway 80 had strong symbolic significance. The vote itself is more than a symbol; it is a very real weapon that people need. But when the demand of the people of Selma for the vote was met with violence, tear gas, and billy clubs their struggle became another symbolic one for the rest of the Southern movement, for the nation—and even to a certain extent for them. Here was racism in its most ugly and obvious and terrible form. Here was hatred and corruption and degeneration —all the fruits of racism—clear and plain to see. And when 30,000 people marched into Montgomery, it was a great victory—but it was a symbolic one, because for the Negro in the Alabama Black Belt life had not changed at all, not even his inability to register and vote.

Symbols are important, but there comes a time when they are not enough. No one can say for sure just when this time came in the Southern movement, but it started long before passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and it spread steadily after that: the cold hard realization that it was not only freedom in the abstract that was needed but freedom in the concrete. Symbols provide a rallying point, but they don't put bread in hungry mouths or make it any more pleasant to live in a house without running water. Symbols don't even help much when the school that was once the white school and then the showpiece token integrated school is fast becoming the resegregated school, as the white families flee to northern-type suburbs and Negroes stay locked in the city by gentlemen's agreements among those who control real estate—or in prescribed and limited suburbs of their own.

The rather obvious problems and frustrations have led some people, especially white liberals, to conclude that the answer lies in war-on-poverty programs. A newspaper columnist wrote at the height of the Selma demonstrations that white "moderates" in Alabama had

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been hoping that the poverty program would absorb the interests and energies of Negro militants. But it obviously has not done so. More Negroes were willing to walk into police lines and possible death to demonstrate for an abstract freedom on the Selma-to-Montgomery highway than have been willing to involve themselves in meetings to plan anti-poverty programs in most places. This is not because they don't know that bread-and-butter matters are urgent; and it is not, as some might suggest, that they don't know enough to operate at the level of "constructive" programs. A partial reason is that anti-poverty program planners have not sought hard enough to involve Negroes (and in most of Alabama actually tried to keep them out). But there is more to it than that.

The fact of the matter is that the average Negro militant in the South knows instinctively that the kind of measures being proposed under the anti-poverty program are not big enough to touch his real problems. He knows, even if he does not put it into words, that his world is not really going to be changed by day nurseries for working mothers, training schools for high-school dropouts, and work with a neighborhood job corps at $1.25 an hour. These things are desirable and needed; but they are not on a scale big enough to deal with what is wrong. People know without saying it in words that the problems they face are giant ones, and since they see no giant answers in concrete terms, they turn once again to the gigantic symbols. These are valuable because through them people are mobilized and they learn their own strength. But where will we turn when these symbolic battles are all won, when there are no more symbolic worlds to conquer, and finally, irrevocably, we must come face to face with the hard need for real change?

It will be 10 years next December since the present phase of the Southern struggle against racism and for freedom had its beginning in Montgomery, Alabama, the cradle of the Old Confederacy. It is only 50 miles from Montgomery to Selma along U.S. Highway 80 where the marchers walked this spring, but it is a far distance in time from the Montgomery bus protest that started it all to the Selma demonstrations of 1965 when hundreds of thousands of people all over the country rallied behind the movement. Even if the battle has been for symbols and little that is fundamental has changed, it could never be said that little has happened. New ways have been tried, new frontiers assaulted. Heroes, known and unknown, have emerged, a social movement has developed that ranks with only a few others in top importance in our history, and the world has been shaken.

What I have written here is mainly for those who are concerned about these events in the South but have watched them from a

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distance or have been involved only for short periods of time. Thus, it is an attempt to put fast-moving events into their chronological order and to indicate the pattern that makes them intelligible. And it is an attempt to analyze, because most commentary on these developments has been by writers looking on from the outside, and many may wonder how the pattern looks from the inside.

In addition, I suppose this article is also a letter to myself. In writing a summary for the outsider looking on, I found I had to dig back and remember things I had forgotten, read things I had laid aside, think about questions I had pushed to the back of my mind to wait "until there's more time." This is the kind of thinking most of us who are active in the South rarely find time for. We tend to live from day to day, from crisis to crisis. It was good for me to have to think back and analyze. I would be glad if others in the movement, through reading what I have written, would be stimulated to do their own probing—even though I am sure many would come to conclusions and even questions that are different from mine.

No one could attempt such an analysis as this without serious misgivings. The Southern movement is big and diffuse and far-flung. No one person could possibly know about it all. Interpretation of history must always reflect the vantage point from which it is viewed, and some will disagree with mine. The fact that I am white instantly raises questions as to whether my views can have basic validity in regard to this particular movement. The fact that I am still living and breathing and taking part in the struggle instantly presents the possibility that I may change my opinions on almost any question within the next few years, or even the next few months.

On the other hand, it is perhaps just such hesitations as this that have limited the consideration of basic issues within the Southern movement. It is not only that we don't have time. It is also because in a world that is changing as fast as ours and in a movement as fluid as this one, we are reluctant to stake out any hard and fast theories and commit them to the seeming finality of the written word.

We need to take some chances, I think, on being wrong. We need to experiment a little more with ideas. We need to lift our eyes occasionally from the heat of today and look down a long road.

And before we can look forward with vision to where we are going, we need to look back and try to understand just where we have been.

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THE EARLY SEEDS OF FREEDOM

To understand what has transpired in the South in the last decade, we have to realize that the freedom movement did not start in 1955. A new phase of it started then—but the Negro's drive against oppression reaches much further back.

Actually, it started on the day in 1619 when the first ship bringing slaves to the New World landed on the coast of Virginia. From then until the Emancipation Proclamation technically freed this country's slaves more than 200 years later, there was a series of slave revolts. Some were small, some were widespread; and serious scholars now agree that many revolts were never recorded anywhere. Meantime, thousands of slaves escaped to freedom on the Underground Railroad, the secret system by which slaves traveled to the North and to Canada, passed along in darkness from one hideout to another. Others lived to fight for their own freedom in the Civil War.

Thus, today, when people speak of the "new Negro," the concept is misleading. The phrase is used to describe a Negro who is standing up for his rights, implying that this type of Negro just emerged in mid-twentieth century. But obviously, from the beginning, American Negroes have had their militants and those who stood up and said "no," even if to say it meant death. The new thing that happened in the mid-twentieth century was that the Negroes who said "no" found a way to organize and to fight.

This didn't happen until almost 100 years after the formal end of slavery for a very simple reason: during much of this century real police-state tyranny gripped the South.

For a brief time, immediately after the Civil War, during the period known as Reconstruction, it appeared that there would be a shift of power in the South. The slave-owning landowners who had dominated the area were defeated; and under the protection of federal troops, new state governments were being established. The new leaders included freed slaves and—although school textbooks ignore this—at least some of the poor white people who had never benefited from slavery and had never supported it. It was a time of great promise; the new governments guaranteed the right to vote to all, gave the

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South its first real free public education, initiated prison reform, government care for handicapped persons, and other social reforms. (There are now available a number of studies which refute the old myths about this period, the most recent of which is the excellent and simply written new book, *Freedom Bound* by Henrietta Buckmaster.) The new governments probably made some mistakes too, as most revolutionary governments do. But if they had had the chance to continue, it is likely they would have gone on to land reform and other basic changes that could have laid the foundation for an egalitarian society in the South.

They never got that chance. In 1877, white politicians in the North agreed to withdraw federal troops from the Southern states and to end any effort by the federal government to enforce the constitutional rights of the freed slaves. This shameful abdication, known as the Compromise of 1877, was precipitated by a disputed presidential election in 1876, in which Northern Republicans agreed to these concessions to get Southern votes for their candidates. But as several recent historians have pointed out, the issues went much deeper. Howard Zinn says that the Compromise "came out of the general conditions of the post-Civil War era, in which Northern politicians and businessmen needed Southern white support for peaceful national development along the lines they desired."

The Compromise of 1877 marks the beginning of the Southern police state that continued into the twentieth century and still exists in parts of the Deep South. Even before 1877, the Reconstruction governments and their supporters were under violent attack by mob and assassin in many places. As soon as the Federal troops left the South, the situation was hopeless. The old rulers began to reclaim power by terror. The Ku Klux Klan became a law unto itself—terrorizing, flogging, and murdering. Lynching became commonplace. The Negro was forced back onto the land of big plantation owners, no longer nominally a slave but living under conditions almost as intolerable.

The terror did not descend in full force all at once, for the white South, then as now, had its moderates, and they tried to soften the blows. Then in the early 1890's there was a brief movement toward unity of Negroes and poor whites under the Populist banner. (Historian C. Vann Woodward says that during this brief upheaval, "Negroes and native whites achieved a greater comity of mind and harmony of political purpose than ever before or since in the South.") This frightened Southern ruling forces so badly that moderate influences lost out entirely, and terrorists took complete control. The poor white Southerner had always been torn within himself—part of

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him knowing that he should identify with the Negro who was also downtrodden, another part of him forever wanting to identify with the white man who had the power and wealth he longed for. Now under pressure of frightened people in power, this poor white man (in the mass, if not every individual) let himself be convinced that it was the Negro who was his enemy.

Thus as the nineteenth century closed, the Southern Negro stood alone. The rest of the country had deserted him, in the South the most extreme racists were in complete control, and all around the globe the white man still reigned supreme. (Vann Woodward points out that the white South got a "permission-to-hate" when the United States in this period plunged into "imperialisic adventures and aggressions against colored peoples in distant lands.") Between 1890 and 1905, the South enacted its fantastic network of segregation laws, and took Negroes by the thousands off the voting rolls. In some parts of the South, Negroes continued to hold office until 1900, but by the beginning of the twentieth century, the lights had gone out all over the region.

It should be noted, of course, that the South was never all of one piece. It is a large area and infinitely varied, both in terrain and sociology. Usually when we speak of "the South," we refer to the 17 states in the Southeastern part of the United States which, along with the District of Columbia, had laws requiring school segregation before the Supreme Court ruled them unconstitutional in 1954. This area includes extensive mountain and hilly lands, which have never had much in common with the cotton-growing flatlands. The area also includes the "border" states, those which did not secede from the United States to become a part of the Confederacy during the Civil War and where loyalties were divided.

The area that controlled the South, however, was the Black Belt—the vast farming lands, rich and flat, which reach across the South in a half-circle, from the eastern shore of Virginia down through the Carolinas, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and into East Texas. White Southerners claim that this area is called the "Black Belt" because of its rich black soil, but the name also refers to the fact that the area has traditionally had more Negroes than whites. It was here that the greatest concentration of slavery developed, because it was here that slaves were useful. The landowners who have ruled the Black Belt—both before the Civil War and after the Compromise of 1877—have possessed power out of all proportion to their numbers because state legislatures were weighted in their favor —and still are to a high degree. Also, these same people have wielded

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disproportionate power over the nation, because their representatives were elected to Congress where they came to dominate key committees.

Gradually, in this century the agrarian economy of the South began to give way to some industrialization, and some natural tensions developed between landowners and new industrialists, the Black Belt areas and the growing cities. In the beginning, however, this didn't change things much for the Negro. More recently, industrial leaders of the South have often become a moderating force because they want to keep peace, and oppressed people demanding freedom disturb the peace. But in the early part of this century, there was no mass movement demanding freedom. Industry was coming South looking for low wage scales, and it was an advantage to have a dual and divided labor force, colored and white. So institutionalized racism—as contrasted with the more formless variety in the rest of the country—continued to infect the entire Southern and border-state area, and the police state atmosphere, developed in the Black Belt, spread its poison throughout the region.

Something happens to people when they live in a police state. The will to resist never dies entirely, and every oppressed people must have had its unknown and unsung resisters. The Southern Negro of the early twentieth century obviously did too, and even today there are folk tales of the sharecroppers who shot the landlord to defend their families. But these people were soon mobbed—or in some rare instances escaped to the North and silence. For the most part, Southern Negroes—like people living under complete tyranny anywhere—accommodated and survived. Some were crushed, some found little ways to get even with the white man, some found ways to get around him, ways to say one thing and mean another, and some way to live. The white South built up its mythology that Negroes were happy with the way things were, and the white North built up its mythology that it was none of its business; and for years there was no organized resistance because none was possible.

By the late 1920's and the early 1930's, there were moderating forces because some Southern whites tried to curb the anti-Negro violence—for example, the white women's organization to oppose lynching, and various regional and local interracial committees. These helped to alleviate the worst terror, but it is doubtful that alone they ever would have conquered it, because their aim was not to change in a real way the social fabric. Seeds of real change were planted only when Southern Negroes began to organize themselves, and this happened only after influences from outside the South began to make themselves felt there—giving support to the theory that a police state cannot be broken without outside help.

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One of these early influences was the NAACP—the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The NAACP did not originate in the South; it was organized mostly by Northerners under the leadership of Dr. W. E. B. DuBois in 1909, at a time when the Southern police state was at its worst. But during the First World War it began to work in the South—exposing atrocities to national view and challenging the worst inequities in the courts. One of its most important court battles from its early years was for the right of the Southern Negro to vote. Soon it was also establishing local chapters through the South, and a corps of Southern leadership was developing.

Today militant people tend to think of NAACP leaders as very conservative, slow-moving, and respectable. This is not always true even now in the South, and it certainly was not true in those early days. A man or woman had to be a person of courage and dedication to become identified with the NAACP, and only the brave qualified. Nor did they find any great rush of people ready to support them; the path of the early NAACP pioneer in Southern communities was a lonely one.

The battle at that time was not against segregation as such. It was primarily for the right to vote, and for equal justice in the courts. Before the days of the NAACP, a Southern Negro had virtually no chance in court at all—unless he was in the good graces of some white man who could "get him off"; and the idea of bringing to court a white man who had wronged a Negro was unheard of.

This situation improved when the NAACP became a factor, bringing its lawyers into Southern courts; just this possibility made prosecutors and police a bit more careful. Early NAACP leaders concentrated on the dangerous job of gathering facts in the myriad cases where Negroes were unjustly accused of crime. E. D. Nixon, the Montgomery, Alabama, pullman porter who later organized the bus protest there, was one who pioneered in this work—traveling the dark country roads to find witnesses who would testify, and risking his life every minute to do it. There were not many spectacular victories, but a consciousness spread through the Negro community that a person did not have to take what the white world handed him without protest and that somewhere—even if far away in New York—there was an organization that cared.

Other seeds of freedom were planted in the South by the general ferment of the 1930's and the organizations that sprang up in that ferment. The young Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) unions tried to organize in the South, and in some places, even if for a brief time, black and white workers came together. Organizations

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of the unemployed also reached into the South, and Negroes found in them a weapon they could use. Crusades like the worldwide one around the Scottsboro case let it be known inside as well as outside the South that injustice could be stopped if enough people knew and protested. By 1938, so many people, both black and white, were in motion that a new coalition, the Southern Conference for Human Welfare (SCHW), drew 3000 people to a meeting in Birmingham and presented a challenge to Southern entrenched political power.

The SCHW was not a Negro freedom organization in the sense that we know such groups today; it was a coalition of Southern whites and Negroes, liberals and radicals, intellectuals and workers and union organizers, who were brought together by a belief that Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal offered hope for the poverty-stricken South. They also wanted to win popular support for Roosevelt's program at a time when it was being riddled by Southern Congressmen. But the SCHW played a part in the embryonic Negro movement of the South, because it fought against the poll tax and for fair employment practices and other civil rights measures; also many Negroes developed into leaders in the SCHW.

Another important seed was planted in 1941 when A. Philip Randolph, the Negro who had brought the nation's pullman porters into a militant union, organized for a giant March on Washington to demand a federal order against racial discrimination in employment. Randolph's union had some membership in the South, and support for the march grew there. The planned march was the first serious proposal that the Negro use mass direct action in his quest for justice. Even though it never actually took place, since President Roosevelt signed a Fair Employment order to head it off, the idea embedded itself in the minds of many people.

Yet another force which was impinging on the Southern police state, although many people don't want to admit it now, was the work of radical political groups, especially the Communist Party. In the nation as a whole, ideas were freer then than they are today, and no one was stopping Communists from speaking. In the South, they faced the danger of jails and mobs, but so did the CIO and NAACP organizers, and Communists were not considered any more outlaw in the South than these were. Furthermore, since the risks of organizing any protest in the Deep South were great, even as they are now, there was a need for very dedicated people. Dedication comes most often in people who have their eyes fixed beyond immediate suffering to a vision of a new world—and this many Communists of that day, both white and black, had. Thus they often faced dangers in the South that others would not. Often the CIO sent its Com-

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munist organizers into the South because they were the only ones who were willing to go and risk getting their heads beat in. This was before either the labor movement or any other institution trying to change America had let itself be divided by the notion that the test of a man is his anti-Communism rather than his devotion to the task at hand. Thus Communists moved and worked freely in the South, and their attack on the economic causes of Negro oppression opened new doors of thought for many people and contributed to the general ferment.

By the time the Second World War came, all these forces had poured in upon the South, cracking open the police state even if not changing the status quo; and leaders of a resistance movement among Southern Negroes were emerging. The war speeded up the process. The fact that it was a war against Hitler and supposedly against racism set many people in America to examining this country's own cancer of racism. Books were written, people were talking, ideas were circulating. Furthermore, people were traveling and coming in contact with new people, new conditions, new ideas. The Southern Negro found out for himself that there were places in the world quite different from the cotton patch where he grew up—and thousands went back home after the war, determined that they would not live the way their parents had.

Veterans had come back with these ideas after the First World War too, but were quickly crushed by a new wave of terror and a resurgent Ku Klux Klan. This threatened after the Second World War also, but many things were different this time. The ferment of the 1930's could not be undone; there were organizations now, new forces, in the white South as well as the black, that would not condone the Klan. Furthermore, the world was different now. The drive toward freedom and independence among the colored people of Africa and Asia was beginning to impinge on the consciousness of the white Western World, and sophisticated people felt it and saw the handwriting on the wall. The "image" of the United States in a world where whites are in the minority was beginning to be a factor. Thus, although a postwar revival of the Klan brought some tragic violence, there were also protests. More than 15,000 people, led by labor, veterans, and civil rights organizations, massed at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington in 1946 to call for Federal action; people turned out for protest meetings in North Carolina, Texas, Louisiana. The Klan was attacked by many Southern newspapers, by the CIO, and ministerial groups. The world of 1946 was not the world of 1919.

In 1944, the NAACP legal staff won an important victory when it got the white primary declared illegal. In the South until very

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recently the Democratic primary was the only election that mattered, since the Republican Party was of little consequence. As long as primaries were closed to Negroes, they were effectively denied a political voice. The 1944 court decision came in a Texas case, but it spurred demands for the vote everywhere; this too came to a head as the veterans came home. Many Southern officials empowered to register voters ignored the court order just as many do today, but the demands were rising.

In Birmingham in 1946, hundreds of Negro veterans marched to the courthouse to seek the right to vote. Similar marches occurred elsewhere. Simultaneously, there were reports of Negro passengers removing the white and colored signs on buses. A Negro just missed by 200 votes being elected to the Virginia legislature. Several hundred persons, Negro and white, appeared before a legislative committee in Virginia to demand an end to Jim Crow laws. In Birmingham, Negroes and some whites defied Police Commissioner Eugene "Bull" Connor (the same one who led assaults on Negro demonstrators 15 years later in 1963) to attend an integrated meeting, and some were arrested. Hundreds of persons, Negro and white, came to a meeting of the Southern Conference for Human Welfare in 1946 to call for an end to "all discrimination based on race, creed, and color," as well as to define such goals as "raising the per capita income, and the housing, health, educational and recreational opportunities of all Southerners. . . ." Chapters of the NAACP were mushrooming, as were chapters of the Southern Conference and also the Southern Negro Youth Congress, a more radical organization.

Thus, by the postwar period, the seeds of freedom were growing, providing the makings of a mass movement for Negro freedom. Why, then, was it almost 10 years later before it finally came? No one can answer that question for sure, but one reasonable theory is that the delay was related to the general atmosphere that pervaded the nation between 1945 and 1955.

As all Americans know, the period after the Second World War did not bring the progress many had expected, but a period of reaction. People who had felt power slipping from their hands during the ferment of the 1930's reached out to reclaim it, to capture and control what new forces they could, including the labor unions, and to destroy those they could not control. All organizations working for social change came under attack, and the world situation made it easy to brand them all subversive. Thus many organizations were destroyed and others divided, and many people were confused.

This all had its effect in the South, as elsewhere. The CIO, which had provided promise of uniting Negro and white in struggle,

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announced several times that it would embark on a gigantic "Operation Dixie" organizing drive, but the drive never really came off. Nationally the CIO was fighting off the new anti-labor Taft-Hartley Act and was beset by divisions arising from the red scare. Organizations like the Southern Conference for Human Welfare and the Southern Negro Youth Congress which refused to go along with purges of those accused of "subversion" were weakened by attack. Others, like the NAACP, which did follow a purge policy, were weakened by resulting divisions. Every organization working for change was embattled and all were on the defensive. Thus the Southern Negro, while ready to revolt, had no framework in which he could act.

The lack of a framework does not stop a revolt that is ready to be born; if it is ready, it just creates its own form, and that eventually is what the Negro revolt did. Had there been on-going movements when the first embryonic stirrings swept over the South with the veterans returning from the war, it might have come sooner. It might also have been a different movement. A Negro revolt rising directly out of and related to the social movements of the 1930's and early 1940's might not have been so completely all-Negro as was the revolt that finally developed. It is also possible that for this very reason it would have been more equivocating on the issue of Negro freedom. A movement tied to the earlier ones might have attacked a broader area than the single issue of segregation and thus might have borne the germs of answers to some of the problems that are plaguing the civil rights movement now. On the other hand, without the single-minded attack on segregation, it is possible that this battle would never have been raised to the level where it now is. No one can ever know.

What we do know is that in the years following the war, the United States sank into a period of citizen-silence. What started as attacks on organizations working for social change became an attack on any individual who raised his voice on a subject of controversy. The attacks became institutionalized through the House Un-American Activities Committee, later the similar committee of Senator James Eastland of Mississippi, and most flamboyantly through the work of Senator Joe McCarthy. People even suspected of radical ideas or activities and some simply suspected of ideas that were "different" were fired from their jobs, driven from their home towns, and cast into the darkness of ostracism.

By the early 1950's, this madness had reached its height, and the great majority of American citizens, both white and black, had quit going to meetings, joining organizations, or signing petitions. They were devoting themselves to their own backyards, their own

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private lives. Young people coming out of school were being careful not to become involved in anything more controversial than the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA); we were raising a generation of young people convinced that before it is all right to do something you must get approval from somewhere—from the government, from powers-that-be. An atmosphere developed in which anyone who dared to suggest that all was not perfect in the United States—that some people were hungry and ill-housed, and that millions lived as second-class citizens—was automatically suspected of disloyalty. Some polite agitation for civil rights continued, but it was always necessary to assure everyone that things were getting better all the time, and there were just a few little injustices that needed clearing up.

About this time, in 1954, the Supreme Court handed down its decision saying segregation in the nation's schools was illegal. Credit for this goes not to anything the current generation was doing to make itself felt, but to the ferment of a previous generation, to the superb arguments of the NAACP lawyers, and mostly (to the shame of America) to the force of world opinion in a largely non-white world. It was an historic event, however, and it could have been a turning point. But much of the promise of the decision was lost because, except for actions by a few individuals and groups, it was met in the South by utter silence.

Here and there Negroes applied for admission to the "white" schools in 1954 and 1955. They were rebuffed; and since there was no mass movement, the individuals who had acted often suffered reprisals. In the white South, no committees for compliance sprang up; a vacuum existed, and within a year the extreme segregationists (who had been stunned by the decision at first and weren't ready to act either) took the initiative and organized the opposition that caused the South so much grief before the decade ended. Later many people over the country asked why the "good white Southerners" weren't organizing in this period. The questioners forgot that this was a time when advocates of social change were not organizing anywhere in the United States. It was a time of social paralysis.

And then at the depth of it, at a time when fear had worn itself out and apathy and cynicism had almost taken its place, at a time when the democratic processes seemed dead and the country's vitality drained away—just at this moment, the most unlikely time in the world, and in the most unlikely place in the world, Montgomery, Alabama, the old capital of the Confederacy—an unassuming Negro woman sat down on a bus and started a new mass movement that would eventually shake the nation and the world and make the American people come alive again.

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2

THE NEW ERA: 1955-56

The Montgomery bus protest was the beginning of a new era in the South, for it was here that Southern Negroes themselves joined forces and said "no" to oppression. Montgomery marked a qualitative change because it was a mass movement, and it was direct action—that is, action that involved each participant in a challenge to the status quo.

It started in early December, 1955, when Mrs. Rosa Parks, a Negro woman, refused to give up her seat on a city bus to a white man and, on orders of the bus driver, was arrested. In two days' time a call had gone out through the Negro community to stay off the buses—and Montgomery Negroes stayed off. For a year they walked, or organized their own jitney service. They continued despite the threat of jail, the bombing of their homes, and the threat and sometimes the fact of lost jobs. There were 50,000 Negroes in Montgomery and for a year they united, spurred on by a sense of purpose that gave hope to the old and inspired the young.

No one can say why it happened in Montgomery and at that time. There exists a tape recording of a discussion held six months earlier at Highlander Folk School in Tennessee, the conference center where Negro and white met during these years to talk about ways to change the South. At that discussion in the summer of 1955, there were several Negro participants from Montgomery. Each of them, including Mrs. Parks, said they feared that Montgomery Negroes would never "stick together." Even when Negro leaders issued the call to stay off the buses after Mrs. Parks' arrest, they did not know whether the people would respond. Some of them, as they reported later, were as surprised as city officials when they looked out their windows that morning and saw the buses rolling by—empty. Not one would have predicted that a year later the people would still be walking. Something had happened.

Certainly, there were in Montgomery many of the necessary ingredients for a mass protest movement. The grievances were real and deep. Montgomery is as Deep South as you can get: located in the heart of Alabama's old plantation country, it is Old South in

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tradition and proud of being the first capital of the Confederate States of America during the Civil War, the "Cradle of the Confederacy." Negroes in Montgomery in 1955 were completely segregated, almost completely poverty-stricken, victims of frequent police brutality and constant insult, and, with the exception of a relatively few who persisted long enough, denied the vote.

City buses were a special point of irritation, not only because they were segregated, but because Negroes had no rights on them whatsoever and were often treated like animals by the drivers. The pre-protest system in Montgomery, as in many Southern cities at that time, required that Negroes fill the bus from the back while whites seated themselves from the front—and when the two met and there were not enough seats, Negroes were supposed to stand and let the whites sit. Actually, Mrs. Parks was arrested not for sitting in the front of the bus, but simply for refusing to move from her seat in what had been the Negro section after the front filled up and the driver ordered her to give her seat to a white man. Even in the early weeks of the protest, the demand of the Montgomery movement was not for integrated buses but simply for a change in this system to a first-come-first-served arrangement. It was only after this mild demand met with outraged and violent resistance that the protesters broadened their objectives and demanded complete integration of bus seating, which is what they finally won.

But the real demand of the bus protest was for human dignity. Before the protest, it was common practice, as the bus began to fill, for the driver to call out—as if shouting to a bunch of cattle—"All right, move back, niggers." The oppression which finally united the city's Negroes was not only the denial of seats to tired bodies but the denial of their very humanity.

Another necessary ingredient for the development of a mass movement that was present in Montgomery was a collection of some remarkable people.

First, there was Mrs. Parks herself. As Montgomery became famous, she was often painted as a naive, retiring, inexperienced little seamstress who just suddenly on that December day decided for the first time to resist segregation. The picture was not entirely accurate. She was a seamstress, and she was (and is) a retiring person who never especially relished the role of heroine. But she was neither naive nor inexperienced, and she had been fighting segregation a long time. Her first memory of resistance to oppression goes back to the 1930's when she can recall her husband and his friends gathering secretly in her living room in Montgomery to collect money for defense of the Scottsboro case. She herself had no part

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in this; she was a young bride who felt her place was in the background. But years later she joined the NAACP and, she relates modestly, because there were so few people she was soon elected secretary of the Montgomery branch. For years thereafter she helped hold the branch together, patiently investigated cases of injustice, urged people to testify, walked the streets seeking memberships. Mrs. Parks often said that she had no thought on that day in 1955 of making a test case—that she was tired and when the driver shouted at her to move, something simply arose from deep in her being and said "No." But long years of patient struggle had prepared her for that moment.

Another of the remarkable people in Montgomery was E.D. Nixon, pullman porter, union organizer, NAACP leader. Mrs. Parks called him when she was jailed, and he began to spread the word that the time had come to stay off the buses. Working with him were a relatively small group of other Montgomery Negroes, especially an active group of women. All these people were veterans of long years of lonely struggle.

The other remarkable person in the picture, of course, was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., who was unknown before he emerged into prominence in the Montgomery movement. His emergence was almost an accident. He had recently come to Montgomery as a young minister, and Nixon and the others settled on him as the leader for the new Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) partly because he was too new to have become involved in factional divisions.

Once he had assumed the presidency of MIA, however, there is no doubt that King injected a new dimension into the bus protest. With him as its spokesman, the campaign became not just a battle for a seat on a bus but a war against an entire system of segregation and degradation—and beyond that a struggle for a whole new world. He was a master of powerful oratory, and his words thundered first through Montgomery and then across the nation: "We are tired of being segregated and humiliated; we are tired of being kicked about by the brutal feet of oppression. . . . We are protesting for the birth of justice in the community. . . . We have a new sense of dignity and a new sense of destiny. . . . We will walk the streets of Montgomery until the walls of segregation are finally battered by the forces of justice. . . . And when the history books are written in future generations, the historians will have to pause and say, 'There lived a great people—a black people—who injected new meaning and dignity into the veins of civilization.'"

Negroes listened, they were aroused, and they followed him—first in Montgomery and then elsewhere. They followed because he

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gave them a new sense of their worth and a new sense of power—and because he said things they already knew but had not put into words. This is perhaps King's greatest genius: that he sensed the aspirations of masses of people and put them into words. Whether the Montgomery bus protest would have lasted as long or reached as far as it did without a spokesman like King is highly problematical.

Yet none of this really explains why the bus protest happened when and where it did. The same unbearable conditions that existed on the Montgomery buses also obtained in cities across the South, and they had existed in Montgomery for a long time. As for the leaders in Montgomery, as remarkable as they were, they had their counterparts elsewhere. There were persistent, faithful, hard-working women like Mrs. Parks in other NAACP branches through the South; there were courageous and skillful organizers like E.D. Nixon in other Southern communities. There may well have been other potential Martin Luther Kings.

Thus it must be concluded that Montgomery happened because the time had come when it was inevitable that Southern Negroes would revolt in mass, that if it had not happened there it would have happened somewhere else, and that a new force was moving in the history of the country.

After a year, the Montgomery bus protest ended in victory and the buses were integrated. The victory came technically after a court decision nullifying the local bus segregation law, and those who belittle mass direct action have said it was this decision and not a year of walking that made the difference. Obviously, however, the court decision would not have come when it did without the long walks of 50,000 Montgomery Negroes.

The Montgomery movement won something far bigger than a change in bus policy. The participants won a new sense of dignity, freedom, and power. They had discovered for themselves that masses of people in motion can change the world around them. They would never be the same again, and neither would the South. It was late 1956 when the Montgomery protest ended, and the ideas it generated had already begun to spread over the South.

They did not catch fire overnight, however, and for most of the remaining 1950's civil rights forces remained on the defensive. Extreme segregationists—acting through mobs, semi-respectable White Citizens Councils, and often through state and local governments—had grabbed the offensive within a year after the 1954 Supreme Court school decision, and for most of the decade they held it. They outlawed the NAACP in Alabama and hampered it in other states. They purged thousands of Negro voters from the rolls in Louisiana,

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enacted new laws to restrict voting rights in some states, murdered the Rev. George Lee, shot and injured Gus Courts, and slew nameless others who tried to mobilize registration drives in Mississippi. The 1957 Civil Rights Act, which was supposed to guarantee voting rights, had little effect. Meantime, state legislative or administrative committees, modeled after the House Un-American Activities Committee of the Congress, attacked all civil rights organizations as "subversive" in Arkansas, Louisiana, Florida, Mississippi, Virginia, and Georgia; and in Tennessee a legislative committee began an attack which finally (in 1961) forced the closing of Highlander Folk School, an oasis where white and Negro Southerners had met together for a generation.

The most effective offensive of Southern segregationists was their drive to thwart the Supreme Court ruling against school segregation. In the border states of Kentucky, West Virginia, Delaware, Maryland, Missouri, and in parts of Texas and Oklahoma, there was some compliance. But in the rest of the South, the decision met open defiance, closed schools, or devious circumvention. The federal government took a hands-off position that left enforcement of the decision to organizations like the NAACP and individual Negro students. Thus every autumn from 1954 through 1960 the front pages of the nation's newspapers were dominated by news of either violence or closed schools, or both. By the end of the decade the bright promise of the 1954 decision had all but melted away.

From the other side, the only assault on the schoolhouse doors came from repeated NAACP actions in the courts and from the handful of brave individuals—the young people, little children and parents—who walked through mobs to be the pioneers. From Autherine Lucy, who braved a mob to try to enter the University of Alabama in 1955, to the first-graders in New Orleans in 1960, there was an honorable procession of the courageous few. No one who lived through this period will ever forget the pictures of young Elizabeth Eckford, head held high, walking by the jeering ugly faces in Little Rock; or the words of the high school boy who listened to his mother beg him not to return to the dangerous scene and then replied simply: "As long as I can walk, Mother, I am going back." These and others like them were the heroes and heroines of the decade, but alone they could bring no real change; they could only keep the doors open.

The only counter-movement to the segregationist offensive was the effort of white moderates, beginning in the latter part of the decade, to stem the violence and save the South's public school

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system. This was a welcome development in the midst of chaos; but it was not an integration movement, nor a civil rights movement, nor a Negro freedom movement, and it should never be interpreted as any of these things. A local movement for moderation started, for example, after the night bombing of a newly integrated school in Nashville in 1957, and it restored law and order to that city. But it made no effort to increase the ranks of the 13 Negro children enrolled in desegregated schools in that supposedly enlightened city. Finally associations of white ministers in Southern cities began to make statements calling for an end of the terror that gripped the region, but a Negro minister and civil rights leader, the Rev. Samuel Williams, pinpointed their shortcomings by commenting that "When the white church finally spoke, it was too late and what it said wasn't Christian." He meant that almost invariably the ministers' statements called for law and order, without mentioning any moral issues involved in the deprival of equal rights to all men.

The movement of Southern moderates reached Southwide proportions under the leadership of Virginians after their state closed the schools in several communities with massive resistance laws in the fall of 1958. This left 13,000 young people without schools, in order to keep out 51 Negroes. Parents, teachers, businessmen, and many civic leaders organized a save-the-schools movement and made themselves heard. At the same time the schools in Little Rock, Arkansas, were also closed, and white people there began to organize to reopen them.

The tide actually turned in favor of the moderates in early 1959, when massive resistance collapsed in Virginia. Rural Prince Edward County abandoned public education after that for five long years, but in 1959 extreme racists lost their hold on the Virginia state government. "This is Appomattox; Richmond has fallen," wrote a Southern journalist, Harry Ashmore, as schools in Virginia reopened, desegregated.

In a way, he was right; this was the beginning of the end of power for those Southerners who said "Never" to any change. Some are still in power in Alabama and Mississippi and parts of other Deep South states, but after 1959 they were losing out. Little Rock too soon reopened its schools. In Georgia, the moderates began to organize *before* the schools closed. In Dallas, leading citizens planned the beginning of school desegregation before trouble could start. This pattern spread.

It should be clear, however, that the objectives of these moderate movements never went beyond controlling the mobs and allowing a handful of Negro youngsters into a few previously white schools.

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Thus, there emerged in the South that phenomenon that for some reason none had foreseen a few years previously—tokenism. In late 1958, the Supreme Court handed down a decision that was little noticed at the time upholding the constitutionality of Alabama's so-called pupil-placement law. This law did not mention race but empowered school officials to assign pupils to certain schools according to a whole set of other criteria, including "psychological qualification." It became clear that this was a device by which tokenism could become institutionalized throughout the region; by the end of the decade fewer than one per cent of the South's Negro children were attending desegregated schools. Some indication of how completely the promise of 1954 had been debilitated came in 1961 when the peaceful entry of nine Negro high school students into four previously white schools in Atlanta—supposedly one of the South's enlightened cities—was considered a great victory. Compared with preceding years, it was, and few people remembered that desegregation had once been thought to mean an end to the dual school systems of the South.

Meantime, the forces that could bring real change were building up in Negro communities across the South, but usually they were still beneath the surface. At the end of the decade, the catalysts were still the individual heroes: the school children who pioneered, people like Amzie Morre and the Negro Catholic priest, Father John LaBauve, who quietly risked their lives to conduct voter registration classes in the Mississippi Delta, the lawyer who went to jail in North Carolina for defending his client before the voting registrar.

Beyond the individuals, new grass-roots organizations designed to seek full citizenship rights sprang up all over the South. In a few places, in the wake of Montgomery, these groups tried mass action. There were bus boycotts in Tallahassee, Florida, and in Rock Hill, South Carolina. In Birmingham, Alabama, known as the most rigidly segregated city of its size in North America and a city of terror for Negroes, the militant Negro minister, Fred Shuttlesworth, emerged as a leader and organized a mass movement. When Alabama outlawed the NAACP in 1956, he formed the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights to carry on in Birmingham. This group challenged segregation in the schools, parks, and public places, and in 1958 encouraged Negroes to "ride up front" on the buses. When the leaders were jailed, 3,000 Negroes massed in silent protest at the county courthouse.

In Tuskegee, Alabama, home of famed Tuskegee Institute, where there had long been a determined campaign for the right

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to vote, Negroes took up the weapon of the boycott and withdrew their business from the town's stores when white leaders got the city's boundary lines redrawn to gerrymander the Negroes out. In 1959, on New Year's Day, Negroes in Virginia (and a few whites) marched 2,500 strong to the state capitol to protest massive resistance. In Burnsville, North Carolina, Negroes boycotted school rather than ride 40 miles on a bus to a segregated one. In Greenville, South Carolina, 600 Negroes marched in protest against segregation of airport facilities after Jackie Robinson was refused service there.

All these actions created tremors heard by those who wanted to hear, and a group of Negro ministers led by Martin Luther King, Fred Shuttlesworth, and Ralph Abernathy organized the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in 1957 in an effort to coordinate some of them and to stimulate more. For individuals who took part there was a new sense of strength. "It is a wonderful thing in the South to be able to walk the streets without fear . . . because you have discovered that you are an American citizen and you have taken a stand," said the Rev. David Brooks in 1957, describing his feelings after the Tallahassee bus boycott.

But for the most part, such actions were still on a small scale, involving relatively few people; much of the ferment was still hidden, and the 1950's ended without any other action that approached Montgomery in scope, size, and impact. It remained for a new generation in the South to pick up the weapon of mass direct action and carry it to a new level.

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3

THE STUDENT REVOLT: 1960-61

It was the Negro student revolt of 1960 that turned the Southern civil rights movement into a Southwide mass movement.

The incident that triggered it was the now famous action of February 1, 1960, when four Negro college students in Greensboro, North Carolina, walked into a dime store, sat at a lunch counter, ordered coffee, were refused service—and continued to sit. From there the idea swept the South; by May there had been student demonstrations in at least 89 cities, including some in every Southern and border state. Hundreds sat at lunch counters; thousands marched in street demonstrations; hundreds went to jail. The Negro South was electrified, the white South was shocked—and the nation as a whole, still trapped in the silence, fear, and apathy of the 1950's, rubbed its eyes and realized that the democratic processes of protest, although rusty from disuse, were still available to those with the courage to use them.

Just as it is impossible to explain why the Montgomery bus protest started when and where it did, so there is no clearcut explanation for the timing and development of what became known as the sit-in movement. The sit-in technique was not new. It had been used since the early 1940's by the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) in Northern cities. In the late 50's there were a few small CORE groups staging sit-ins around the edges of the South, in such border cities as Baltimore and St. Louis. In Oklahoma City in 1958, an NAACP youth group conducted a mass sit-in campaign that opened lunch counters there; this was widely publicized, but it did not spread.

Many people refused to believe that the sit-in movement growing from Greensboro was spontaneous, but it was, and nobody active in the civil rights movement would have predicted it. In fact, the constant lament among adult activists in that period was, "Where is the younger generation?"

The only explanation is that this generation, unbeknownst to

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its elders, had simply—individually and collectively—had enough, and when somebody struck the right match at the right moment the social bomb went off. Some sociologists have theorized that it happened to this particular generation because they were just old enough to be aware of what the Supreme Court decision of 1954 should mean to them, and when after six years it had not meant anything, their frustrations broke into action. This was also a generation whose parents matured during the earlier ferment of the 1930's and the early 1940's. That generation never developed a full-blown revolt, but they raised their children in a different tradition. "My generation of parents," said one Negro leader in the mid-50's, "is not telling our children—as our parents told us—that they have to subject themselves to every whim of the white community." Also, some of the students who coalesced into a Southwide movement had been protesting as individuals for a long time. For example, John Lewis, later a leader of the new student movement, says that long before the sit-ins, he tried to integrate the library in his home town in Alabama. Virginius Thornton, another sit-in leader, had several years before organized Negro high school students to stay off a bus sent to take them to a segregated school.

When the students finally merged into a Southwide movement, they had no definite goals beyond the lunch counter, but everyone knew that this was only a symbol and the real objective was much larger. It is doubtful that any participant in the sit-in movement ever really thought the objective was a hamburger and a cup of coffee. "We want the world to know," said a mimeographed newsletter from a small college in North Carolina, "that we no longer accept the inferior position of second class citizenship. We are willing to go to jail, be ridiculed, spat upon and suffer physical violence to obtain first class citizenship." An Alabama student, arrested in a demonstration, told a reporter: "There are not enough jails to hold us. There are not enough roads for us to leave the state." When the students met in their first Southwide conference at Raleigh, North Carolina, on Easter weekend in 1960, one of them declared in a meeting: "This is the most significant gathering ever held in America since the Constitutional Convention." Students of history may feel that this was an exaggeration, but it was the way these students felt in 1960. They burned with a sense of mission and a sense of history.

It was partly because the breadth of their vision often seemed too big to put into words that this movement turned so much to song. Music became the movement's most effective means of communication; students learned old songs from the church and the labor movement, added their own words, and made up new songs.

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Each jail cell produced its own verses. No other movement in our history, not even the early labor movement, has been such a singing movement as this one became.

An interesting aspect of the movement's music relates to Highlander Folk School, formerly in Monteagle, Tennessee, which the state of Tennessee was then in the process of destroying. It was from Highlander that the music of the Southern civil rights movement came. The song that later swept the nation, "We Shall Overcome," for example, was a Highlander song. It came originally from the Negro church, and was adapted by striking tobacco workers in South Carolina, who sang it on picket lines. Zilphia Horton, wife of Highlander director Myles Horton and a talented folk singer, learned it from the strikers in the early 1940's and brought it to Highlander, where she taught it to successive groups of visitors. One of these was Pete Seeger, the folk singer, and he began to sing it around the country. Guy Carawan, a young folk singer on the Highlander staff in 1960, taught it to the emerging student activists; they gave it new verses and soon it was the theme of demonstrations everywhere.

There is something symbolic about this development. By 1961, Tennessee had succeeded in closing Highlander and although it later opened a smaller center in Knoxville, its main building on the mountaintop at Monteagle was burned by vandals at night—as if someone wanted to erase its memory from the face of the earth. Yet by that time "We Shall Overcome" was on the lips of people across the nation and would four years later be quoted by a President addressing Congress. Here is some indication of the indestructible nature of the movement arising in the South and of the futility of the actions, even the worst actions, of those who were trying to hold back the dawn.

The defenders of the Old South were still at work in those early 1960's. Police were using tear gas to break up demonstrations. At some state colleges, teachers were fired and student demonstrators were expelled. Libel suits were filed against civil rights leaders (and against the *New York Times*) in Alabama. Many individuals were hurt by these attacks. Some became martyrs—like Clyde Kennard who was sent to jail for seven years on a trumped-up charge after he applied to enter a white college in Mississippi and later died of cancer when early symptoms were neglected in prison. But the movement as a whole pushed forward; in contrast to the 1950's when the segregationists held the initiative, it was now the civil rights forces that were on the offensive; and it was a time of victories.

Within six months after the sit-ins started, 28 cities had integrated their lunch counters; by the fall of 1960 the number had

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risen to almost 100, with protest movements active in at least 60 more. There were kneel-ins to integrate white churches, wade-ins at the swimming pools and beaches. By the spring of 1961, the sit-in movement finally reached Jackson, Mississippi—the first place where police dogs were used against demonstrators. More than 3,500 walked in a silent march to Nashville to protest the bombing of a civil rights attorney's home and forced a statement from the mayor on the City Hall steps supporting equal rights for all. Eight thousand gathered in mass meetings in Atlanta, and 2,000 students marched in the streets.

Years before, the Southern satiric writer Harry Golden made people laugh with his suggestion that since Southerners did not object to integration when people were standing up (as in supermarkets or on the street) desks should be taken out of schools and "vertical integration" initiated. No one thought then that it might ever happen, but sure enough—although not in schools—it began to happen after 1960; some lunch counters removed their stools and integrated. More often they integrated with everybody sitting down and many Southerners were startled to find the sky did not fall in at all; businessmen reported in surprised pleasure that their business went up instead of down. "I used to say this town was not ready for desegregation," said one Nashville white man, "but the sit-ins made it ready." A prominent white Southern attorney, Marion Wright, said: "Many people have said it takes time to change customs. They should look at the South now. In eight months' time we have completely altered the customs of our public eating facilities." It was a daily newspaper in North Carolina, and not a civil rights publication, that first in referring to the student sit-ins quoted Victor Hugo: "There is nothing so powerful in all the world as an idea whose time has come."

Permanent organizations coalesced around the student movements in some communities. One of the most remarkable was in Nashville, Tennessee, where entire student bodies participated, and where the first breakthrough on citywide integration of lunch counters occurred in May, 1960. The Nashville students developed a system of "group leadership" under the guidance of a young Negro minister, the Rev. James Lawson. Often they would meet all night until in the dawn hours they could reach unanimous "sense of the meeting" decisions. Because they were ready to go to jail and stay if necessary, they won the trust of the other students, so that when the time came for mass action the masses were there. Out of this Nashville group came many of the students who emerged as Southwide leaders later: the Rev. James Bevel, Diane Nash (later Mrs. James Bevel),

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Bernard Lafayette, John Lewis, Marion Barry, Lester McKinnie, and others—and also the young ministers, C.T. Vivian and Kelly Miller Smith, who rose to leadership in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

Regionally, the lasting organization that came out of the sit-in movement, which probably changed the course of history in the South, was the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC—pronounced SNICK). This organization was set up at the 1960 Easter conference in Raleigh, to which students from the various sit-in movements came. The Raleigh conference was called by SCLC when it became obvious that some sort of coordination of the sit-in movement was indicated. There were 142 Southern students present, with every Southern state and about 40 campuses represented. SCLC provided some speakers and workshop leaders; and the woman who was to become a kind of godmother, adviser, helper, and patron saint to SNCC, Miss Ella Baker, organized the conference as an SCLC staff member. But when the students gathered, they grabbed the reins for themselves, and it became apparent that they wanted their own independent organization. This became a position that they maintained with dogged determination, and under great counter-pressures.

Thus, with the development of mass movements around the sit-ins, the South now had four major civil rights organizations working to organize Southern Negroes: the NAACP, SCLC, CORE, and SNCC. These were in addition to the Southern Conference Educational Fund (SCEF) which had been working for many years to involve white people in the movement for equality.

The NAACP was the pioneer. Theoretically, the NAACP was a mass organization, with its basic support supposedly the $2-a-year membership. In practice it never really became that, and its work was usually carried on in each community by a select few. In the South, these few were an elite only in terms of courage, and they struggled against great odds to involve more people. But the principal thrusts of the organization were through the test cases in the courts, the demand for justice for an individual under attack, the fruitless but persistent push for national legislation, and the steady if largely unsuccessful effort to get Negroes registered to vote.

When direct action broke into the streets in 1960 and afterward, these methods looked very conservative to many people; and the NAACP, although still a devil in the eyes of segregationists, developed the reputation of being the most conservative of the civil rights groups.

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In a region as large and varied as the South, it is risky to make generalizations, and in some communities it was the NAACP youth councils that led direct action campaigns. Southwide, however, after 1960, the conservative image of the NAACP became self-perpetuating and it tended to attract more conservative Negroes—those who wanted change but with as little fanfare as possible and who were not much concerned with involving many lower-income Negroes in the process. They concentrated on voter-registration campaigns and court action. Their preferred court action was in aggressive test cases battering down the legal walls of segregation, as in the repeated school cases. They were less interested in the defense of demonstrators who got arrested because they did not always approve of the demonstrations that brought on the arrests. But after SNCC began turning to the National Lawyers Guild for some of its legal work, and after SCLC began to set up its own legal defense foundation (the Gandhi Society), the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund (a separate organization from the NAACP but its legal wing) took on the mass legal defense of both SNCC and SCLC demonstrators and became again the major legal arm of the Southern movement.

SCLC, as previously noted, was formed in 1957 under the leadership of Martin Luther King, Jr., and other Negro ministers. Its objective was to develop mass movements in Southern communities and make use of direct action; its channel of work was primarily the Negro church where much of the ferment of the period was brewing. It was not very successful at first in creating mass movements, but its ideas were circulating. One of the healthiest developments of the period was the seemingly spontaneous development of grass-roots social action organizations in Negro communities across the South. Many of these associated themselves with SCLC and some coordination developed.

SCLC's greatest weapon was King himself, for he had captured the imaginations of Negroes and could go into any Southern community, draw a crowd, and electrify it. The organization had no staff initially and depended on communication among the various militant minister-leaders. Then organizational foundations were laid by Dr. John Tilley and Miss Ella Baker, a former director of branches of the NAACP who had pioneered in organizing in the South. Later the Rev. Wyatt Tee Walker, a young Negro minister who had risen to leadership in the Virginia sit-in movement, came and applied both Madison Avenue techniques and a good bit of hard work to welding SCLC together. As civil rights action increased, the organization became more prominent and built a full-time staff.

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Later it branched from direct action into voter registration, leadership training, and legislative action. But its main thrust remained mass direct action, and its greatest successes were mobilizations of entire communities in a way that attracted national attention.

CORE, like NAACP, was an old organization, but before 1960 a tiny one, concentrated almost entirely in the North. Its Southern work prior to the sit-ins was almost wholly in Nashville where it did a remarkably good job of encouraging Negroes to apply to the supposedly integrated schools; in South Carolina where it developed voter registration drives; in Miami where it began some direct action; and in the border city of St. Louis. After the Greensboro sit-ins, CORE grew rapidly. It knew more about sit-in techniques than any other organization, and had more calls for help than it could handle. It expanded its staff and sent organizers into the South. CORE chapters then sprang up in considerable numbers. These sought to lead mass movements, but the basic CORE organization was a relatively small group of well-trained individuals, dedicated to direct action. In the beginning CORE placed some stress on making its Southern groups interracial. Subsequently, it became less of a Southwide force and began to concentrate in the Deep South and in Negro communities, especially in voter registration in North Florida, parts of Mississippi, and Louisiana.

Another organization which is often mentioned nationally as a "major" civil rights group is the Urban League. Chapters of the Urban League have long existed in the South. When the segregationists were on the offensive in the 1950's the Urban League came under vicious attack along with all other groups identified with the Negro cause. However, among people in the movement, the Urban League was not thought of as a real civil rights organization. Its original purpose, as its name suggests, was to help rural Negroes adjust to urban life. Its specialized effort was to open up job opportunities to Negroes, mainly through quiet negotiations. Sometimes the Urban League worked in the background in cooperation with more public campaigns sponsored by more militant groups, but it was not in the main current of Southern revolt.

If there was any one single factor that shaped Southern history in the early 1960's, it was the unexpected turn that SNCC took. For SNCC attracted the young, the unencumbered, the daring, the image-breakers and the pioneers; and they became the catalysts as only the young can be. The important turning point came when SNCC looked away from the campus and into the community.

For its first year and a half, SNCC was exactly what its name implied—a coordinating committee. After the Raleigh conference

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it set up a tiny cubbyhole office on Auburn Avenue in Atlanta and had one full-time, although rarely paid, employee. The center of SNCC was an actual coordinating committee with representatives from each Southern state, who met approximately once a month between April, 1960, and the summer of 1961.

By the spring of 1961, most Negro campuses were quiet. In some places, lunch counter victories had been won. In others, movements had been crushed by expulsions of students and firings of sympathetic faculty. Everywhere there was a realization that those who continued in the movement would have to take on bigger issues than lunch counters and that the next stages of struggle would be harder. "The glamorous stage is over," said one student at the SNCC conference in late 1960. "From now on, the need is for people willing to suffer."

The Rev. James Lawson was a main speaker and a key influence at that conference. Lawson was a pacifist who had been to India and studied Gandhi's methods. During the 1950's he worked in the South for the Fellowship of Reconciliation and traveled about the region seeking to bring small groups of whites and Negroes together to act. Later he decided that this kind of activity was not the key to social change, and turned instead to the organization of Negro mass movements for direct action—in which his efforts coincided with the rise of the student sit-in movement.

Lawson constantly urged the students to define deeper issues and long-range goals beyond the lunch counter; he advocated what he called "nonviolent revolution" to revamp the entire society. One tactic he advocated was filling the jails and refusing to make bond. This had been talked about from the beginning of the sit-ins but rarely practiced for long, as older Negro leaders and parents, feeling that it was not quite respectable for the college youngsters to be in jail, raised bail by the thousands of dollars and got them released. Lawson himself had reluctantly agreed to make bond after his arrest in the Nashville sit-ins when white faculty members at Vanderbilt University where he was a graduate student came to the jail with the bond money. "I left jail," he said at the time, "because the approach of the Divinity School faculty marked the first time the white community had come to the Negro's help in the sit-in. For me, it was symbolic."

Later, Lawson apparently felt a greater imperative had been sacrificed and at the 1960 fall SNCC conference he said in his speech:

We lost the finest hour of this movement when so many hundreds of us left the jails across the South. Instead of letting the adults

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scurry around getting bail, we should have insisted that they scurry about to end the system which had put us in jail. If history offers us such an opportunity again, let us be prepared to seize it.

History never has—not for the student movement as such. In the late winter of the school year 1960-1961, there were some efforts at a jail-instead-of-bail movement on Southern campuses, and at one point there were in various towns as many as 100 students serving sentences instead of appealing. But the student movement, as a campus uprising, had by then passed its peak, and still in the spring of 1965 no campus-based movement comparable to 1960 has yet appeared again in the South.

What happened by the spring of 1961 was that a group of students connected with SNCC emerged from the sit-in movement with the realization that efforts to change the South must, for them, be a serious adult commitment. There were only a handful of them, but within four years they were to become the core of a new army of young people who would not only invade the Deep South but the ghettos of the North and the poverty-stricken areas of Appalachia. By 1965 this army had grown to such proportions that the federal government devised a domestic peace corps (VISTA) and developed semi-official governmental groups such as the Appalachian Volunteers in obvious efforts to absorb the energies of youth looking for something meaningful to do with their lives. People in control of society would prefer that youthful energies go into efforts more easily controlled by the power structure and therefore not likely to challenge the present control.

It was February, 1961, when the first group of SNCC pioneers experimented with the concept of going beyond their own community to challenge segregation. Students were arrested at Rock Hill, South Carolina, for attempting to integrate lunch counters. They chose jail instead of bail and served out 30-day sentences. Meantime, four SNCC leaders from elsewhere went to Rock Hill, demonstrated, were arrested and joined the local students in jail, and then sent out a call to other students across the South to join them there. The four were part of the vanguard who would become full-time crusaders later—Charles Jones of Charlotte, North Carolina, Charles Sherrod of Richmond, Virginia, Diane Nash of Nashville, and Ruby Doris Smith of Atlanta. Their call for other students failed, but the idea of the traveling challenger of segregation and the technique of concentrating many people from many places at one point of challenge was to become important in the Southern movement later.

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Meantime, in May, CORE launched its Freedom Ride—a pilgrimage of whites and Negroes riding Southward from Washington, D.C., bound for New Orleans, planning to integrate bus station facilities all along the way. The ride was relatively uneventful until it reached Alabama. Then a bus was burned in Anniston and the riders were attacked by mobs there and in Birmingham; and yet another phase of the Southern struggle was underway.

The original riders, many beaten and bloody, abandoned the ride at Birmingham, but the Nashville student group picked it up, rode a bus on to Montgomery where they were beaten by a mob; from there riders proceeded on to Jackson, Mississippi, where they were quietly and efficiently arrested. Throughout that summer Freedom Riders continued to roll South—all of them destined for the jails of Jackson and Mississippi's Parchman State Prison. By the end of August, more than 300 had come, three-fourths from the North, about half students, and over half of them white. Most got sentences that would amount to six months if fines were not paid, and most stayed in jail for 40 days, the deadline to appeal convictions.

The Freedom Rides were a good illustration of the symbolic nature of the Southern struggle. This was pointed up by a Southern journalist who commented on the difficulties he and other newspapermen had in trying to explain the Freedom Rides on a program recorded for overseas broadcast by the Voice of America. "We had to try to explain, among other things," he said, "how some of those white people who joined the mob that beat the Freedom Riders at the Montgomery Greyhound station rode on integrated city buses to get there. We were not at our most lucid best."

Other newspapermen pointed out in their reports that the Greyhound station in Montgomery had actually been integrated quietly several weeks before the Freedom Riders arrived—by a small group of Negroes who came without fanfare from another Alabama city.

Some Southern white liberals wrung their hands and wondered wistfully why the Freedom Riders had to be so flamboyant in their assault on the segregated waiting rooms.

"I'm no gradualist," one said. "I know somebody has to challenge these things. I don't say there shouldn't be an organized campaign to integrate the bus stations. But why all the advance publicity? That's what stirs people up. Most of the terminals in the South could be integrated if it were just done quietly."

He was probably right. Those white men the journalist found it hard to explain to people abroad—the ones who rode the integrated Montgomery buses to get to the Greyhound station and beat the

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Freedom Riders—very likely did not consider it a life-and-death matter whether Negroes sat in the "white" waiting room of that station. But they had been aroused to rage by the advance newspaper stories saying the Freedom Riders were coming and their rage resulted from an instinctive knowledge that much more was at stake than seats in a bus station.

The Freedom Riders knew it too, and that, rather than any desire for publicity for its own sake, is why they had to do what they did with flamboyance and publicity and would not, if they could, settle for the quiet one-by-one integration of the South's bus stations. The bus station was the symbol, and the real stakes were much higher: equality, human dignity, a place in the sun. The mobs knew it, and the police in Jackson knew it, and the Freedom Riders knew it. And that is why they all responded as they did—those who felt threatened by the drive for equality reacting in fear and hatred, those identifying with the movement for freedom reacting with a willingness to risk their lives for seats in Southern bus stations.

Finally in the fall, the Interstate Commerce Commission ruled that all bus and train stations must integrate. Thus, although compliance was not immediately complete, the Freedom Riders won their specific objective.

In their broader symbolic significance, they did a good many other things too. They widened the Southern struggle into the national arena, for the first time giving Northerners something direct they could do in the South. They also brought encouragement to thousands of Southern Negroes, and the term Freedom Rider became legendary; even today many a Negro sharecropper in remote areas of the South refers to all civil rights workers as Freedom Riders. The rides also introduced and popularized a new concept which became proverbial in the movement: "Put your body into the struggle." That concept was one factor that helped propel those searching SNCC students from the campus into the community.

They were further propelled, although indirectly, by forces in the national power structure which the Freedom Riders unintentionally set in motion.

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MOBILIZATION AT THE GRASS ROOTS: 1961-62

Early in that summer of 1961, a group of SNCC leaders went to Jackson, Mississippi, and began to organize support there for the Freedom Rides. They met with some success, and a Jackson student movement began.

More important, the experience crystallized a dream some key young leaders had developed over the previous year: if they were going to change the South, they could not remain just a student movement; they had to organize the communities.

Actually, the very existence of the student movement since 1960 helped stimulate action by all age groups. In West Tennessee, a militant voter-registration movement grew under the adult leadership of John McFerren; when sharecroppers who had registered to vote were evicted by their landlords, they attracted national support by setting up a "tent city" in which to live. In Hopewell, Virginia, and in other communities in that state, direct-action movements cut across age lines. In some communities older Negro leaders saw the student uprising as a threat, but others looked eagerly to it for help.

The other important thing that happened in that summer of 1961 was that powerful people, from the White House down, got very much worried about the "bad image" the disorders surrounding the Freedom Rides were creating for this nation abroad. They were eager to get the movement "out of the streets" and into other arenas. Also, the Kennedy administration was much interested in registering Southern Negroes to vote; Negro voter registration in the South was 1.3 million out of a potential 5 million. Whether the Kennedys were interested because of moral concern or the belief that registered Negroes would vote for Kennedys is not important. The important thing is that they were willing to do something about it. Attorney General Robert Kennedy pointed out that this was one area where the federal government had laws to use; both the 1957 and 1960 Civil Rights Acts were supposed to protect voting rights. He urged

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the young people—and other civil rights organizations—to concentrate on a gigantic registration campaign in the South.

Simultaneously, and openly related to the Kennedy effort to steer the movement into voter registration, civil rights groups were approached by private foundations offering to give large amounts of money for registration drives. To many in SNCC, this was the opportunity they had been looking for—now there would be money, they thought, so they could work full time. There were also rumors—never confirmed officially—that young people working in voter registration would get deferment from the military draft.

"We've been saying we want to give ourselves to the struggle," said one Negro student. "Now the way is open. The only question is, are we willing to give our bodies to it?"

For some in SNCC it did not seem that simple, and the organization was almost torn apart by the resulting debate. Students who had been deeply involved in direct action felt that voter registration was a tame operation and a draining of their energies into ineffective channels. Nashville students noted that Negroes there had had the vote for a long time—but that nothing changed until thousands marched in the streets. After their lunch counter victory, they tried a registration drive but found students remarkably uninterested.

The other group in SNCC—the pro-registration people—argued that it was only through the vote that real changes could come. "This is a matter of power," one of them said. "It doesn't matter how many lunch counters you integrate—until you get political power things don't change." Besides, these advocates argued, in the Deep South areas—where terror awaited the Negro who tried to register—voter registration would actually be direct action.

The argument was never really settled that summer, but SNCC managed to hold together by dividing into two wings—the voter-registration wing and the direct-action wing. This turned out to be temporary, because as the work moved into the Deep South those who had said that voter registration and direct action were one and the same proved right—and the lines between the two blurred. Meantime, the important thing was that the offer of financial support had propelled a group of dedicated young people into the Deep South to organize. Jim Forman, the Mississippi-born Chicago teacher who came South to write and found that history pushed him into the administrative job of executive secretary of SNCC, summed it up this way later: "Sixteen cats in 1961 decided it would be good if a small group devoted itself full time to the movement." And that was the beginning.

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The first venture of students into community organizing was abortive. It was in the late summer of 1961 in Monroe, North Carolina. This was not a SNCC project—but it involved some students who were already or would later be a part of SNCC.

Monroe is a small town in southwestern North Carolina where Robert Williams, a militant young Negro, was a leader. Williams had fallen into disfavor with national civil rights leaders when, after seeing two white men freed by the courts after vicious attacks on Negroes, he suggested that Negroes must protect themselves by "meeting violence with violence." This statement was widely publicized and upset many people, including some who made no claims to being advocates of nonviolence but said Williams should not have said such a thing publicly. This, along with other militant positions he had taken (such as embarrassing the United States by publicizing North Carolina injustice overseas) caused the more respectable civil rights organizations to tag him as "uncontrollable." Once he was cast into outer darkness by these groups he found it harder and harder to get even meager police protection. Thus, in 1961 when the Freedom Riders at least had some protection from federal marshals after a nationwide protest demanded it, pickets attacked by hoodlums at an all-white swimming pool in Monroe, were still ignored by local, state and federal agencies.

Some young Freedom Riders were disturbed by this and decided to go to Monroe and try to help. They also wanted to try their hand at community mobilization.

It didn't work. When they set up a picketing operation, they were attacked by white mobs. Police looked the other way, and several people almost got killed. Robert Williams and other Monroe Negroes, along with some of the students, were charged with kidnapping a white couple, and Williams fled Monroe to keep from being murdered. The kidnapping case was obviously a frame-up. Williams left the country, convinced that he would be killed if he stayed to face trial. The other four defendants received prison sentences ranging up to 20 years. A higher court reversed their convictions in early 1965 on grounds of racial discrimination in jury selection, but Monroe officials got new indictments against them in May.

Since 1961, thousands of words have been written about Monroe. Believers in nonviolence have used it to prove that violence does not work, and opponents of the nonviolent theory have used it to prove that nonviolence won't work. Actually it proves that a group of young people with admirable intentions but with little experience

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and little planning run into problems when they rush into such a community.

Jim Forman, who was one of them and who later became one of the most skilled community organizers in the South, said immediately after the Monroe fiasco:

> We were hoping a pattern could be set whereby teams of 10 or 12 young people could spend their summers in Southern rural communities, attempting to develop nonviolent movements for justice. . . . The movement has succeeded at the lunch counters in the cities. But what about the Negro in the small town who does not have the money to go to the lunch counter? We hoped to offer an answer to the economic problems of lower class Negroes.

This approach became a guideline as SNCC moved into Deep South communities, and the failure at Monroe no doubt became an ingredient of the more soundly organized campaigns later.

The first thing decided by those "16 cats" who determined to "put their bodies into the struggle" was that they would concentrate in Deep South rural areas. These sections still dominated the politics of the South. They were also the toughest areas, where people were the most oppressed.

They decided to concentrate first on, of all places, Mississippi—the state generally considered the worst. This was partly because that is where student organizers, following the Freedom Riders, had made some beginnings. It was also because the young New York school teacher, Bob Moses, was already laying groundwork there.

It may be significant that Moses developed his dream of grass roots political organization in Mississippi without regard to the overtures from foundations and the federal government in that summer of 1961. He first came South in the summer of 1960 and toured Mississippi to recruit students for the second SNCC conference. There he studied what he saw and began to think, and there he met Amzie Moore and began to dream about what might happen if Negroes could vote in that state where they were 42 percent of the population but where only 5 percent of voting-age Negroes were registered. Moses went back to New York that winter, but in the summer of 1961 returned to stay. Actually, he took virtually no part in the debate raging among SNCC people that summer; while the others were talking, he was quietly working in Mississippi: contacting people, finding places for civil rights workers to live, looking for meeting places.

This relates to the other important decision SNCC made at that time: that if people were going to organize an area they must

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move into it, and become a part of it. This they did—first that initial group, later many more—into small towns, country villages, onto back roads, first in Mississippi but soon also in Southwest Georgia, Black Belt Alabama and rural Arkansas. The money promised by big foundations didn't begin to come through until the following year because there were complications about channels for it. But the young people learned to live some way—seemingly on air and dedication. Often local families took them in, and they picked squash or chopped cotton for their keep. Many times they went hungry. One of the early student organizers in Mississippi made it a habit to eat just once a day—about 2 a.m. before he finally went to bed, because, he said, he didn't like to "go to bed hungry."

Under the impact of this operation, over the next year and a half a complete metamorphosis took place in SNCC. The early sit-in leaders were not, by and large, middle-class in origin, as some observers claimed; most well-to-do Southern Negroes sent their sons and daughters East to college or to the very few prestige Negro institutions in the South. But the early movement *was* middle-class in its aspirations. Many of the leaders came from rural cabins or city slum streets, but hard-working parents had saved to send them to college and they were on their way up. When they spoke of civil rights, they usually meant the right to get rich with the white man's son and move into the suburban split-level house. The symbol of that early sit-in movement—as widely depicted in photograph and cartoon—was a well-dressed young man, in suit and tie, seated in dignity at a lunch counter. Middle-class white Southerners, contrasting this picture with the white hoodlums who were dropping lighted cigarettes down the students' backs, breathed a sigh of relief and decided that perhaps Negroes, after all, were nice and respectable like themselves.

Three years later, at the 1963 SNCC spring conference, most of the organization's active workers showed up in overalls. The change in dress was no prank. The overalls had become the uniform of the youth movement. It was the students' way of saying that their identification was with the great majority of the South's Negroes who are desperately poor.

"I used to think the thing to do was work hard and get ahead," explained one student. "Now I know I can't be really free until all Negroes are free."

With the change in dress and identification came a change in goals too. All through SNCC there was less talk about lunch counters and more talk about the freedom to have a decent job

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and enough money to feed a family. The young organizers were reflecting the drives of the poor in the communities where they were working. They had walked the dirt roads of Mississippi, had seen the children hungry and the mothers cutting up the living room furniture for firewood; and integrated lunch counters came to seem less and less important.

There were also other influences prodding the movement beyond the lunch counter. Some were in SCLC. It too turned more toward the Deep South areas where the struggle promised to be sharpest. At the 1961 SCLC fall conference, the Rev. Jim Lawson spelled out his idea of "nonviolent revolution":

It would be well to recognize that we are merely in the prelude to revolution, the beginning, not the end, not even the middle. . . . We have been receiving concessions, not real changes. . . . We must sweep away the tyranny of centuries, even institutions away. . . . While we recognize segregation as harmful to the whole nation and the South, we rarely blame this on the system and the structure of our institutions. . . . But if after over 300 years, segregation (slavery) is still a basic pattern rather than a peripheral custom, should we not question the "American way of life" which allows segregation so much structural support? . . . The economy of the South encourages segregation—with cheap labor, keeping certain groups of Negroes and whites pawns of the financial interests, using race hate to stop unions.

As a method of attack, Lawson proposed the formation of a "nonviolent army" of from 2,000 to 8,000 volunteers for "mass nonviolent action in the Deep South."

Let us recruit people who will be willing to go at a given moment and stay in jail indefinitely. . . . The Freedom Rides were a start at this, but they involved too many people for a court test and too few for a jail-in. Imagine what would happen if in the next 12 months we had such an army ready. A campaign with such an army would cause world-wide crisis, on a scale unknown in the Western world except for actual war; not even a Berlin crisis could be used as an excuse for America to escape its cancer at home.

Lawson noted that young Americans give a year or more of their lives to service in a "violent army," and asked why they should not be willing to give similar time in a "nonviolent army" for a revolution at home.

The SCLC endorsed Lawson's proposals nominally in 1961, but only a few people made serious efforts to implement them and the army never materialized as he proposed it. However, something similar began to develop, without this name, in the various actions in Albany (Georgia), Birmingham, and Selma in 1965.

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Another SCLC thrust beginning in 1961 was an effort to develop grass roots leadership through citizenship training. This was initiated among the unlettered people on the Sea Islands off the coast of South Carolina by Mrs. Septima Clark. Because she refused to resign from the NAACP, Mrs. Clark lost her job as public school teacher and became director of education at Highlander Folk School from which she extended the citizenship education program to other parts of the South. After Highlander closed, SCLC took over the program.

Under this program, people with leadership potential were trained to be teachers of others in their home communities. They learned techniques of teaching the unlettered to read and write. They also learned to teach the rudiments of government and the democratic process. What resulted was a literacy program, but unlike some approaches, this was literacy with a purpose. It was always clear to everyone that the basic objective was to encourage Negroes to vote and to take control of their government. Mrs. Dorothy Cotton, one of the program leaders, has noted that people who have a reason to learn do so very quickly; thousands of people learned to read and write in the citizenship classes.

The Rev. Andrew Young, another SCLC leader, said the ultimate purpose of the program was to make the Southern movement a true mass movement. "It must be that," he said in a report to an SCLC convention, "not only in numbers but because it is a movement of the common man. It is the grass-roots people who can bring change."

He maintains that there is great hidden talent in those grass roots. "You have to know the Negroes in the South to understand it," he said. "You meet a man who never went beyond the second grade and he's spent all his life in a cotton patch. But you talk to him and you realize that he's got a Ph.D. mind."

That was the job of the citizenship program, Young said—"to comb the South for those Ph.D. minds that have been wasted in the cotton patches."

Despite these various thrusts from civil rights groups, there was no immediate response from the silent masses of Southern Negroes. SNCC organizers going into the rural Black Belt communities at first found local Negroes crossing the street to avoid them. The young organizers were no "outside agitators" either; sometimes they were Negroes from nearby counties. But they were identified with the movement—they were "freedom riders," as they were indiscriminately called. So they were dangerous. To local Negroes, association with movement people meant likely loss of job and pos-

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sible death. SNCC organizers in Mississippi once escaped through a back window of their Greenwood office as a lynch mob approached on the other side. In Southwest Georgia, a woman who taught SCLC citizenship schools and took in SNCC workers had shots fired into her home. The same thing happened in Delta homes. In Amite County in Southwest Mississippi, Herbert Lee, a farmer who worked with Bob Moses, was shot and killed in 1961—and in 1964 a man who witnessed his murder, Louis Allen, was also killed. And so it went.

There were reasons other than fear for the lack of response. As one SNCC worker in Southwest Georgia put it: "People have such a struggle just to live. When you work in the cotton fields all day and come home to eat nothing but pork and beans—and get ready for another day—it's hard to even think about registering."

But gradually, despite the danger and the seeming hopelessness of their lives, people took a stand. Some were young—like 16-year-old Brenda Travis who led student sit-ins in McComb, Mississippi, and went to reform school for it; some were old like Mrs. Annie Raines, 68, of Lee County, Georgia, a practical nurse who had delivered 1,000 babies in her community, both white and black, and serenely watched her former patients turn on her as she exchanged paternalism for democracy and joined the movement. Each in his or her own way, made some inner decision—like that of Brenda Travis who describes her feelings when she decided to join the NAACP; how she set out walking to the home of the local president and wouldn't let herself stop, saying inwardly, "I'm going to rule myself; I'm not going to be afraid."

Sometimes the new leaders emerged under dramatic circumstances, from what had seemed to be a paralyzed Negro community. For example, the first mass breakthrough in Mississippi came in the spring of 1963 in Greenwood, after the arrest of one young Negro SNCC worker, the near-fatal shooting of another, and a decision by county officials to cut off the surplus-food program, on which many Negroes depend for survival in the winter. Until then, SNCC had been unable to reach many people. All of a sudden now, they began to come in from the countryside; hundreds marched to the courthouse to try to register. It was the movement's first mass confrontation in a rural area of the Deep South. One factor in the breakthrough was that SNCC was able to organize campaigns over the country to send in food and clothing quickly after the government food was cut off. Thus Mississippi Negroes knew that they were not alone, not totally dependent on the toleration of local white men. Again the police state could not be broken entirely from within.

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In contrast to this dramatic situation, sometimes new movements developed very quietly. For example, in Perry County, Alabama, where Marion is located, when civil rights organizers came in 1964 they found a solid organization that had been working for several years. These people had heard what was going on elsewhere and had caught the spirit.

Thus there spread over the Deep South a new layer of leadership. Most had not been the traditional "Negro leaders" in their areas. A few were middle-class, but more often they were poor, for dangers were great and only those with little to lose were attracted. Even when they were ministers, which might sound professional and middle-class elsewhere, they were often men who preached for virtually nothing on Sundays and during the week worked wherever they could in order to live.

One important pattern developed as the student movement sent full-time organizers into communities: wherever they went, and no matter how much they talked about voter registration, direct action spread in their wake. That was not, except perhaps in isolated cases, because the students were seeking voter registrants with one hand and organizing sit-ins with the other. Usually the direct action was spontaneous. The very presence of young organizers aroused some people in the community, usually first the young people. Once aroused, they were often remarkably disinterested in the vote. It was the familiar pattern: what was wrong seemed too big to tackle any other way, so they assaulted symbols. And they often risked their lives and certainly their immediate freedom to sit at lunch counters where they had no real desire to eat, because this was visible, this was oppression, this was something the individual could reach. This pattern developed, for example, in McComb, Mississippi, where SNCC workers first concentrated when they entered Mississippi. They went to register voters, but Brenda Travis and others walked downtown not to the registration office (they were too young anyway and their elders weren't going) but to sit in at a drugstore.

The first mass movement that followed the student move into the communities was in Albany, Georgia, and it was sparked by assaults on lunch counters and bus and train stations. SNCC organizers moved into Albany, a town of 58,000 population, 40 percent Negro, in Southwest Georgia, in the fall of 1961; they planned to make the city a base for work on voter registration throughout the rural Black Belt counties surrounding it. A group of young people were arrested for trying to use the white-only bus and train waiting rooms. There were protest marches, more arrests; Martin Luther King, Jr., was invited to come in and speak and help; he got ar-

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rested and because of his national news value the campaign was soon on front pages over the nation. Albany became a concentration point for both SNCC and SCLC staff workers; arrests soared to over 1,100.

There were three phases to the Albany direct action drive: first, the actions of late 1961; second, an uneasy truce through the late winter and spring; and finally, another big flare-up of mass marches and mass jail-ins in the summer of 1962.

Albany was an important peak in the Southern civil rights drive because it was the first time since Montgomery that an entire Negro community had mobilized. The movement cut across all age and class lines. Even the local police chief told the city's white people that they must face the fact that the Albany Movement (as the civil rights coalition was called) represented the entire Negro community.

Southern Negro leaders said the Albany Movement was an advance over the Montgomery movement of six years before because, whereas Montgomery had been a mass withdrawal (in that Negroes stayed off the buses), Albany was an aggressive movement in which Negroes used mass marches, demonstrations, etc., to take the offensive against segregation. Furthermore, whereas Montgomery had focused on a single indignity, Albany was an assault on the total pattern of segregation.

But by the fall of 1962, direct action in Albany died away, with no clear-cut victory. The movement's main leverage was the power of masses of people staying in jail, and as one SCLC staff member later said, it just ran out of people to go to jail. Jail-staying was still a new concept in the movement, and for adults it means probable loss of jobs and income and a complete change in one's economic and personal situation, perhaps for a lifetime. Short of a truly revolutionary situation, there will always be a limit on the number of people willing to go that far. The Albany Movement did not end in that fall of 1962, but it began to channel its energies into voter registration, and it was no longer a point of national focus.

Significantly, the registration drives burgeoned after the direct action campaign as they have often done in such circumstances; people who get out in the streets and become directly involved in attacks on the deplorable conditions of their lives begin to sense a power, and they begin to grasp for other weapons, one of which is the vote. This laid the basis for future political action in Albany, and Negroes began to run for office there. But the over-riding fact to many people at the time was that after all the suffering, jails, and physical brutality against Movement people, the direct action

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campaign ended and not one thing in Albany was desegregated except the bus station, which opened up after the Interstate Commerce Commission order.

Key leaders in Albany, however, firmly maintained then that Albany was not a failure—and they still take that position. To understand this point of view, it is necessary to realize that one of the first purposes of recent action in the South has been to spark change within the Negro himself. This has nothing in common with the so-called "improvement" plans of white liberals who suggest that Negroes should get educated and otherwise overcome the disabilities imposed by segregation before they demand an end to segregation. Rather it is a recognition on the part of emancipated Negroes that there are many Negroes, especially in the Deep South, who have never realized that it is possible to say "no" to oppression, a recognition that oppression creates an inner degradation and that its victims unconsciously accept the proposition that there is no way out.

Negro leaders of the Albany Movement maintained that the campaigns there in 1961 and 1962 forever broke those inner chains. Never again, they held, would Negroes in Albany bow down before an oppressor. The Rev. Wyatt Tee Walker, then aide to Martin Luther King, said the direct action movement was doing what the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 did not—"freeing the Negro's soul." It was the difference, Walker said, between having something done for you and finding you can do it yourself. Jim Forman, by then executive secretary of SNCC, put it another way. Describing Albany in the fall of 1962, he said: "Victory has been won when people recognize the power they have in their own hands when they are organized."

By 1965, there was again great restlessness and frustration in the Albany Negro community. By then, ironically, the basic demands of the 1961-1962 movement had been won. Public accommodations desegregated in response to the 1964 Civil Rights Act—which the Albany Movement certainly had a part in achieving. The schools desegregated—in a token fashion, of course—in response to a court order which would never have been obeyed without the challenge of the Albany mass movement two years before. The Negroes of Albany finally got what they had demonstrated for in 1961-1962, although late. Whether what they were demonstrating for was all they really wanted is an entirely different question.

Meantime, the national spotlight moved away from Albany late in 1962. All through this period there was never any real quiet in the South; there were repeated upsurges in widely scattered communities: student demonstrations in Talladega, Alabama, finally

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broken by court injunction; a student drive in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, broken by expulsions from a Negro college and mass arrests; sit-ins in Huntsville, Alabama, by all ages including mothers with children; sleep-ins in Nashville hotel lobbies; picketing at Edenton in North Carolina's Black Belt; new demonstrations in Tallahassee, Florida; and then the next national focus of the Southern movement in the Birmingham demonstrations in the spring of 1963.

Birmingham was essentially an SCLC operation. The foundation had been laid by Rev. Fred L. Shuttlesworth and his Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights. Shuttlesworth had built a mass movement involving hundreds and, at some crucial points, thousands; contrary to some distorted reports these were poor Negroes, not middle class and professional people, most of whom stayed aloof from the movement until it grew to national proportions. For more than a year, Shuttlesworth and other Birmingham leaders urged Martin Luther King and SCLC to come into Birmingham and turn a national spotlight on that city. Birmingham was known as the most rigidly segregated city in the world outside of Johannesburg, South Africa. Furthermore its police had a reputation for brutality. Shuttlesworth was convinced that Birmingham would never change without massive pressure from the outside, as well as from the inside. Furthermore, he was convinced that once the pattern of segregation cracked in Birmingham the beginning of the end was near for the entire South.

Never did an analysis prove more surely a prophecy. Birmingham was a turning point in the Southern struggle; it eventually changed the face of the South and awakened the nation. This does not mean that everything is perfect in Birmingham today. But the movement eventually got what it asked for there too. Whether it asked for all it really wanted is, as with Albany, another question.

The immediate objectives of the Birmingham campaign were a beginning on desegregation of public accommodations and a beginning on opening up job opportunities. As at Albany, thousands joined the movement and went to jail. Birmingham did not run out of people to go to jail before the nation was fully aroused. This was partly because the children of Birmingham became involved. That got SCLC and King much criticism, but usually the critics were white people who had never known, or conservative Negro adults who had forgotten, what it is like to be a Negro child—how early he knows that he is in a prison without bars and what it does to his personality *not* to protest. An eloquent defense of the involvement of children was published by a Negro newspaper at the time. The reporter described a six-year-old Negro boy in Birmingham, what

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his life was like, and his inability to do anything about it. Then, the writer noted, the movement came and he could do something about it and King came and the world knew. "They said Martin Luther King was using that little boy," the report concluded. "The truth is that he was using Martin Luther King."

One thing that helped make the Birmingham campaign different from Albany was the nature of the opposition. In Albany the police chief worked hard to maintain a humane image, convincing many people that he was only doing what was necessary to maintain law and order. He maintained law and order all right, but as historian Howard Zinn noted in a major report, he did it by arresting every man, woman, and child who disagreed with him and by running the town with "the quiet efficiency of a police state." In Birmingham, the police commissioner was still Bull Connor who had been breaking up integrated meetings since the 1930's. He brought out the police dogs, clubs, and fire hoses. The nation and the world were shocked—and moved to action.

"We drew the poison of the Birmingham police yesterday," said Shuttlesworth, obviously triumphant, on the day after he himself was almost killed on a Birmingham street. People who don't understand the direct action movement interpret that remark to mean that this movement wants to provoke violence, but this is not the point. What it wants to do is to draw to the surface the underlying violence that strikes in darkness, to bring it out where the world can see. For decades Birmingham police had been invading Negro homes, brutalizing Negroes, and sometimes killing them—all under cover of darkness, unknown to the world. Only when they began to do it openly was there hope of change.

Another thing that made Birmingham a turning point was one of those unexplainable phenomena—as with Rosa Parks' action and the Greensboro sit-in. In a way that defies a completely rational explanation, sparks flew from the Birmingham demonstrations that ignited the South. No state remained untouched. In a single month, there was mass direct action in at least 30 cities. Some surveys placed the figure at 100 communities for that entire hot summer of 1963. For the first time, mass direct action against segregation was spreading into the North too.

In the South, the period was comparable to those early months of the 1960 sit-ins—when demonstrations leaped from city to city and the whole South seemed on fire. But there were important differences from 1960. Whereas then it had been mostly students, now the movement cut across age lines. And whereas then the demand had been lunch counters, it was now what came to be called an

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"open city"—that is, desegregation of all public accommodations. There was more talk too of jobs without discrimination.

The 1960 sit-in movement reached sufficient proportions to force both major parties to put the strongest civil rights planks ever into their platforms. The 1963 upsurge awakened the nation to the fact that it had to face some major changes. The young people in the Southern movement had long called their work a "revolution." Now this word found its way into the most respectable publications in the country. President John Kennedy, who earlier in 1963 told Negro leaders he would not propose any new civil rights legislation that year, sent to Congress the strongest civil rights bill yet proposed in this country—including a ban on segregation in public accommodations.

The great accomplishment of the summer of 1963 was that by the end of it the struggle for desegregation of public accommodations was essentially won. Some people don't mark up the victory until the following summer when the new civil rights bill was finally passed by Congress. But this was simply a writing into law of a victory that was already a fact. In the wake of the 1963 demonstrations, at least 79 cities instituted some desegregation. Later some people expressed amazement at the widespread compliance with the 1964 law, even in the Deep South. This too reflected the effect of the demonstrations that had gone before. As that white man in Nashville had said in 1960: "This town was not ready for desegregation before, but the sit-ins made it ready." There was also compliance in 1964 from some cities where there had been no demonstrations, as officials sought to avoid turmoil; but the most complete desegregation—with fewer evasive tactics like exorbitant prices to Negroes or conversion to private clubs—was in those communities where there was an active freedom movement. The struggle to open public accommodations was won in the streets, including the biggest street demonstration of them all in Washington in August, 1963, which insured that the victory would be written into law.

Much of the ferment of the nation came to a focus in that giant March on Washington which united 250,000 people from across the country. It was an historic outpouring on the part of many, many determined people, and it said once and for all that this nation could not ignore its oppression of the Negro.

Yet all was not well for the freedom movement on that day when thousands marched in Washington. The storms beneath the surface came into view when it became known that some of the more conservative leaders of the march had threatened to withdraw unless John Lewis, chairman of SNCC, altered his speech.

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Lewis agreed to do so in the interest of unity, but even in altered form his speech was the most militant heard that day.

In the original draft, Lewis wrote:

In good conscience, we cannot support the administration's civil rights bill, for it is too little and too late. There's not one thing in the bill that will protect people from police brutality. . . . What in the bill will protect the homeless and starving people of this nation? What is there in this bill to insure the equality of a maid who earns $5 a week in the home of a family whose income is $100,000 a year?

In the toned-down version, Lewis said SNCC supported the bill but with "great reservations" and went on to spell out, pretty much unchanged, what they were.

He cut the sentence that read: "We cannot depend on any political party, for both the Democrats and the Republicans have betrayed the basic principles of the Declaration of Independence." But he left in this one which also frightened many people: "The party of Kennedy is also the party of Eastland. The party of Javits is also the party of Goldwater. *Where is our party?*"

The problem was that the Lewis speech attacked the federal government and the Kennedy administration and thus violated the unannounced but generally accepted "line" of the march. Early in the summer when pressure for a march on Washington began building up, the Kennedy administration was very cool to the idea. Then administration leaders apparently decided "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em," and rolled out the Washington red carpet for the marchers. The top march leadership responded by making the demonstration pro-civil rights and anti-segregation but not anti-Kennedy—and many of them sincerely felt that this was the way to get something done.

Lewis, on the other hand, who had been constantly on the front lines in the South reflected the thinking of people there. Despite the public accommodations victories in some parts of the South, this had been a time of serious failures too. A direct action campaign in Jackson, Mississippi, completely fizzled. So did one—although it took longer—in Danville, Virginia, where special deputies beat demonstrators brutally. It was also a time of widespread violence—from the murder of Medgar Evers in Mississippi in June until the church bombing (in September after the Washington march) that killed four Negro girls in Birmingham. In between there were a multitude of incidents—many never widely reported because they involved little known places and unknown people: church burnings in rural areas; mass arrests of demonstrators in

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Americus, Georgia, where four student leaders were jailed on charges of insurrection; cruel beatings of civil rights workers in many places, sometimes by hoodlums, but often by police. Jim Forman, wherever he had access to a public forum, said over and over, "The Number 1 problem in the South is police brutality," but few people seemed to hear.

More and more, people working in Deep South areas were asking why the federal government could not or would not do something to stop these things. The question had been building up for a long time. In the early days of the new movement in the South, nobody really expected the federal government to do much. Traditionally Southern Negroes have looked on FBI agents with suspicion because whatever they told them seemed to get back to hostile local officials. Dwight Eisenhower was President when the new upsurge started in the mid-50's, and although he did send troops to Little Rock when the situation there reached chaos, he never claimed to be for desegregation in princple—refusing consistently to say more than that he would support law and order.

With the Kennedy administration, however, the expectations were different. John Kennedy ran on a strong civil rights platform. And it was Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy who a few months after he took office urged civil rights forces to concentrate on voter registration and promised them full support.

At first things did seem different. Now civil rights workers in the Deep South could call the Justice Department in Washington collect, and charges would be accepted. They could call federal officials at home in the middle of the night and get a polite response. All this made people feel better; no longer did Negroes and their white co-workers in hostile Southern communities feel so completely alone.

Gradually, however, the spell began to wear off. Somehow it became less and less enchanting to have one's collect calls accepted when the voice on the other end was always explaining why Washington couldn't do anything. Victims of police brutality filed affidavit after affidavit with the FBI—and nothing ever happened. FBI agents stood on the streets taking notes within a few feet of officers poking demonstrators with cattle prods—and nothing ever happened.

The explanation given by the FBI was that they were a fact-finding agency. The explanation given by the Justice Department was that they were hamstrung by the doctrine of federal-state separation of powers, that local law enforcement was the domain of local officials. Highly respected constitutional authorities chal-

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lenged this position, declaring that the Civil War of 100 years ago had supposedly established the proposition that the federal government has not only the right but the responsibility to protect its citizens. They pointed to specific statutes passed after the Civil War which they claimed the Justice Department could use to arrest both police and private citizens who violate the constitutional rights of others. To the average civil rights worker under a policeman's club, even if he knew no constitutional law, it just made no sense that the most powerful nation on earth could not protect the lives of its own citizens.

Then in the summer of 1963, just before the March on Washington, nine leaders of the Albany Movement were indicted—not by the state government but by the federal government. The case grew technically out of a grand jury investigation of a white grocer's complaint that the Movement had tried to put him out of business because of his vote on a federal jury in another case, involving the shooting of a Negro by a sheriff. The nine Movement leaders were charged with either conspiracy to injure a juror or perjury. Negroes in Albany were stunned. During the height of the Albany struggle, many affidavits had been filed with federal authorities detailing violations of Negro rights, and nothing was done. One of those now indicted was Slater King, who had helped organize the Albany Movement. In 1962, his wife was kicked by a deputy sheriff and soon thereafter lost her unborn child. Nothing was done about that either.

Later, civil rights attorney William Kunstler described the Albany case as a "bone thrown to the segregationists by the Kennedy administration." There is absolutely no way to explain it except as an effort of the Kennedys to carry water on both shoulders, and appease Georgia's segregationists while courting the civil rights movement.

"I want to know—which side is the federal government on?" asked John Lewis in his original Washington speech. He cut that sentence out of the delivered version, but people throughout the movement continued to ask the question. Organizationally, SNCC came to personify the most sceptical approach to the national administration, but the question was not confined to SNCC. The urgency of it was in direct proportion to the closeness of any person to the struggle in the Deep South, regardless of his organizational affiliation. "I've come to the conclusion," said an SCLC staff member, "that the only time the government is going to do anything is when there's about to be a riot and they have to."

Howard Zinn maintains that the problem is that the Compro-

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mise of 1877 under which the federal government agreed to keep hands off the relationship of the Southern power structure to the Negro citizenry is still in effect—and that no President since then has had the courage to repudiate it. Zinn wrote that in 1964, and nothing that has happened since alters this judgment—despite President Johnson's "We Shall Overcome" speech in which he proposed new voting rights legislation. It was only a few weeks later that peaceful civil rights marchers in the Alabama Black Belt were being tear-gassed and arrested, and FBI agents were still taking notes.

Thus, over the past few years, the realization grew that the federal government is not in itself a savior. More and more people in the movement faced the fact that freedom cannot be handed down from above and decided that democracy, if it is to be real, must begin at the bottom. It was in Mississippi that this approach most clearly guided the direction of the movement.

Since 1961, the movement in Mississippi has been developing along different lines from anywhere else in the South. To understand this, we have to go back to the time when those first students went to Mississippi in the wake of the Freedom Rides.

These students, all Negro and college products, were as unprepared as white liberal intellectuals might have been for the deprivation of most Mississippi Negroes. Some had gone to Mississippi convinced that Negroes there were sitting on their doorsteps waiting for the young to lead them to a new society. When they found that centuries of oppression had crushed the spirit of revolt, some were disillusioned. Then they began to grope toward a theory that they must produce some inner revolutions before there could be an outer one.

"The young people here have never had a chance to hear about freedom—they don't know their own worth. We need our own school system," said one young worker.

"All they do is hang around in joints. How could they feel they are worth anything?" another asked. "Music dinning in their ears all the time—I believe it is a plot of the segregationists. We need community centers where people can go."

"My God," reacted one veteran of the civil rights struggle when she heard these comments, "they are all going to become social workers."

That didn't happen, but as most of the world knows, the Mississippi movement did go on to organize its own freedom schools, community centers, and cultural program. In the process, many Mississippi Negroes did indeed get new images of themselves—and many of those students, the ones who stayed, learned also. They

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found they didn't have all the answers after all and that the uneducated sharecropper could teach them a number of things. The movement never became "social work" because its purpose remained to change society. But the effort to change people so they could change the world around them also changed the movement. It became less flamboyant. Direct action was minimized—not because the young organizers didn't believe in it, but because they thought it would be significant only when local people were ready to lead it themselves. The students had studied the effects of the Freedom Rides, which had been an important ground-breaking operation, but which had left life for Mississippi Negroes not much changed.

From the beginning the political side of the movement was emphasized in Mississippi too. Finding the official voting rolls closed tight, the movement began to set up its own polling places, make its own ballots, and run its own candidates in what became known as "freedom elections." In the first such campaign, Aaron Henry, who pioneered for years as state NAACP president ran for Governor, and the Rev. Ed King, an emancipated white Mississippian, for Lieutenant Governor. More than 85,000 Negroes voted, out of a potential 430,000—not bad for a start. The purpose was to show that Mississippi Negroes would vote if they could and to inject some real issues into Mississippi politics. The next step was inevitable: that the disfranchised would set up their own registration system.

Thus was born the Freedom Democratic Party (FDP) which "registered" its own voters and was open to all, but in fact was almost entirely Negro. The FDP ran three candidates for Congress and one for the Senate in 1964. It organized at the precinct level, and held its own county, district, and state conventions. A sense of the political gripped people who had never been close to such things before. "Until a year ago, I never heard the word 'precinct,'" said one Jackson woman. "Now they can't call a meeting that I won't be there."

It was to assist the FDP, the freedom schools, and the community centers, that hundreds of young volunteers, 85 percent of them white, went into Mississippi in the much-publicized Summer Project of 1964. The civil rights groups in the state had united to form the Council of Federated Organizations (COFO). Mississippi Negro leaders made it clear to volunteers that they were not being called upon to try to be heroes. Bob Moses, the young man whose quiet courage and careful sense of organization had given form to the Mississippi movement, told them: "You are not freedom riders. The idea is to stay out of jail if you can. Your job is to strengthen

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local people. If each of you can leave behind you three people who are stronger and more skilled than when you came, that will be 3,000 more people we'll have to work with next year."

There was also the secondary purpose of the Summer Project which its leaders frankly stated—to involve a callous and deaf nation in Mississippi. It is stark testimony to the inherent racism of the United States that not until white people worked in the Mississippi movement did the nation look and care. Tragedy soon brought this point home. When Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner, both white and Northern, were killed with James Chaney, Negro and a Mississippian, everyone knew that if it had been only Chaney, few would have heard about it. Bob Moses repeatedly told the press in early 1964 that five Negroes were murdered in racial incidents in Mississippi in the preceding six months, and few took notice. But the Schwerner-Goodman-Chaney murder aroused the nation, and their martyrdom worked to save the lives of others.

The Summer Project didn't register many voters, because the state wouldn't allow it, but more than 55,000 Negroes registered in the FDP, 3,000 enrolled in freedom schools, and 40 community center programs were begun. Not all of these continued, but some did and everywhere seeds were planted. Most of all, the Summer Project left behind new rays of hope in Mississippi.

It did something profound to the people who came from the outside too. The Mississippi movement was not callously using them as cannon fodder. Those who came knew they were risking their lives and wanted to do it. For some it was the beginning of a lifetime of commitment; for almost all it was an experience that would forever make their lives more meaningful. SNCC, which conceived the project, sensed something most of the nation did not previously seem to know—that a sizable number of young Americans yearn for something meaningful to which they can relate their lives. The Summer Project was designed to harness that yearning to the needs of the Mississippi freedom movement. One result was that various groups planned summer projects for young people in 1965, both North and South.

The Mississippi movement has released creative energies in the lives of many people—both Mississippians and outsiders. People of many professions have come: teachers to work in the freedom schools, actors to the Free Southern Theater, doctors and nurses through the Medical Committee for Human Rights, lawyers mobilized first by the National Lawyers Guild and later by other groups. Ministers have come by the hundreds, sponsored by the National Council of Churches and various separate denominations. As an

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organization, the white church in the South still vacillates on implementation of human rights (although many individuals within it have been heroic), but nationally the church finally responded to the challenge from the South. This has added great strength to the Southern freedom movement, but the benefit flows both ways: many a minister and rabbi have found in the movement a meaningful ministry and a significant channel for their religious beliefs—as the doctors, lawyers, teachers, and others have found a way out of the sham that dominates their fields of work in so much of America.

All this has happened in the movement throughout the Deep South, but the mass release of talent started in Mississippi. From a jail cell in McComb, in his early days in Mississippi, Bob Moses wrote to a friend about the "tremor" that was beginning in Mississippi—"a tremor in the middle of an iceberg—from a stone that the builders rejected." By 1964, it seemed that in the midst of an America grown sick with its own corruption and futility the stones that the builder had rejected were forming in Mississippi an embryo of a new society, one that was vital and young and challenging and that called forth the heroic and creative in those who dared to respond.

In a sense, this was happening because the Mississippi movement was withdrawing from the existing society. That essentially was what the freedom schools, the community centers, and the FDP represented—withdrawal from the white world and a setting up of new social, cultural, and political institutions.

Many movement people worried about this withdrawal. Was it not necessary, they asked, to come forth and confront the evil state? How long would people support the movement if it could not begin to crack the racist power?

In late August, 1964, there finally was a confrontation by the Mississippi movement—but not in Mississippi. It was at Atlantic City as the Freedom Democratic Party demanded that its delegates be seated at the Democratic National Convention instead of the regular Democrats from Mississippi. The confrontation shook not only Mississippi but an entire startled nation—a nation that had become used to thinking one could only go to the top through channels and that you can't fight City Hall, much less the Democratic National Committee.

The Johnson administration was shocked and frightened, for here for the first time in many years was a force in American politics that could be neither predicted nor controlled. Johnson wanted to mute the racial issue in the hope of avoiding showdowns that make elections hard to win. To Freedom Democrats from

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Mississippi, racism was a cancer and not an issue to be muted. They refused to compromise in their demands for seats—winning for themselves and for SNCC which supported them the fury of the Johnson administration and some more moderate civil rights leaders.

But they also won something else. They won a place in history as the first truly grass roots political movement this country has known in a long, long time. To the sophisticated it seemed almost a miracle because they had no big money behind them, no political power, and in the beginning not even the big names of the civil rights movement. Yet here were Negro sharecroppers from Mississippi, some of the poorest people in the nation, speaking to the country and making themselves heard. Support groups sprang up all over—and by the time the FDP challenged the right of regular Mississippi Congressmen to sit in the House of Representatives in January, 1965, they had more than one third of the nation's Congressmen voting with them. Little people in many parts of the country began to feel that if the sharecroppers of Mississippi could make their voices heard, then maybe they could too—and a new possibility of meaningful grass roots politics seemed to be opening up. "We have decided in Mississippi," said Mrs. Victoria Gray, an FDP congressional candidate, to supporters from all over the nation, "that it is time for people to quit reacting to power and start making power react to us."

There is no myth about the grass roots nature of the FDP, and its development is probably the single most important thing that has happened in the modern freedom movement to date. Here it is being proved that even in our complex society, which some have said must turn men into machine cogs and machines into men, little people can organize themselves politically to take control of their own destiny—in other words, that democracy can work.

The first major confrontation on the voting issue within the South, however, came not in Mississippi but in Alabama. SNCC started working on registration in Selma late in 1962. All efforts met stony resistance, despite federal suits. Meantime, the Rev. James Bevel and his wife, Diane, formerly identified with SNCC but now of SCLC, had taken up the Rev. James Lawson's idea of a nonviolent army and had moved to Alabama to implement it. The army did not develop in this form, but the Bevels and other SCLC staff began to concentrate in the Black Belt. In January, 1965, SCLC moved into the area in force—in a conscious effort to dramatize the continued denial of voting rights in the Deep South. Sheriff Jim Clark of Dallas County made it easy for them, as had Bull Connor in Birmingham, and once again the evil of racism was brought

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into the light of day. The result was the greatest upsurge of national support for Negro freedom that has yet been seen.

One by-product of the Alabama campaign was that long-simmering divisions between SNCC and SCLC began to get written about in the newspapers. There were vicious press attacks on SNCC, probably inspired by powerful forces starting with the White House and unfortunately possessed of some allies within the civil rights movement. These forces decided after the FDP challenge that SNCC was a threat to the political status quo and must be destroyed as uncontrollable.

Most of what has been written about the SNCC-SCLC divisions is distortion. For example, SCLC has been depicted as moderate and nonviolent, SNCC as wild and violent. This is falsification. Both SCLC and SNCC continue, as organizations, to espouse nonviolent direct action as a means of social struggle; on the staffs of each of them are people with widely varied attitudes toward nonviolence as a matter of personal philosophy and individual practice. Again, SCLC has been painted as responsible and more given to the long hard pull than to demonstrations, SNCC as a group of wild youngsters interested only in demonstrations for demonstrations' sake and not about "to pitch into the hard work of actually registering voters," as one columnist put it. This too is distortion. Many SNCC people did object, once demonstrations started, when Martin Luther King turned the march back as it approached the police line. But it was SCLC, not SNCC, that started mass demonstrations in Selma in 1965, and it was SNCC people who had been walking country roads for months, doing the tedious job of seeking out potential voters.

Despite these distortions, there are some real differences between SNCC and SCLC. The one basic dispute involves theories on the nature of social change. SNCC has held as a cardinal principle that the job of its staff is to help develop local people to be their own leaders. It has always resisted anything like a "great leader" idea. In SNCC's early years, it rotated the chairmanship at each meeting to avoid any one person becoming the personification of the organization. In late 1964, after Bob Moses rose to national fame as leader of the Mississippi movement, he left the state, changed his name and took up residence elsewhere to begin organizing anew. He told friends that the people of Mississippi must lead themselves and that with the image he had acquired he could only cripple them if he stayed.

This rejection of the great-leader idea reflects a disillusionment among the young with leaders of the past. It also reflects a conviction

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that the only significant social action is what people do for themselves.

Within SCLC too there are people who try hard to develop local leadership. Nevertheless, emphasis on a single leader is inherent in the SCLC operation since it was built originally around King's person and personality. A fact of life is that King's name and presence galvanize a Negro community in the South. This may not be a healthy situation; it has certainly sometimes been a debilitating one, for many a movement has languished and died waiting hopefully for King to come lead it, and sometimes when he comes and then departs, a vacuum is left behind. But people who wait for King's presence want him because he attracts national attention and also because he inspires the people, as anyone knows who has sat in a Southern mass meeting while he speaks. King and SCLC did bring the Alabama Black belt into the national and international spotlight, something that SNCC, for all its hard work, was not able to do. Obviously, despite their difference, the two groups can in many ways effectively complement each other—and the forces which have tried to divide them undoubtedly know this. As of the spring of 1965, top leadership of both SNCC and SCLC were trying to minimize their differences publicly. No matter how much they might grumble privately about King, SNCC leaders were unhappy about students who spent a few days in Alabama and went home to make speeches, purportedly representing SNCC and attacking SCLC. Likewise, while King and other SCLC leaders might shake their heads privately over the tactics of SNCC, King apologized to John Lewis because a minister, purportedly speaking for SCLC, had publicly attacked SNCC. Both organizations know that a major split in the Southern movement could benefit no one but the racists.

For in the spring of 1965, the Southern freedom movement finds itself in the strongest position it has ever known. It has come a long way since those first SNCC organizers looked with coolness on the suggestion that they register Negroes to vote. The movement has turned political in a big way. This trend really started in earnest back in mid-1963, about the time it became apparent that the public accommodations battle would be won. But the political turn reflected more than that; there has been a qualitative change in the voter registration campaigns since 1961: then they were essentially the campaigns of the national administration into which civil rights workers were being drawn; by 1963 the campaigns were the movement's own. The change came with the realization that the Southern Negro could not depend on the federal government to establish his freedom for him.

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The change also reflected a growing awareness within the Southern movement of the places in the world where colored people were taking over the reins of government. Interest in Africa, in particular, has been mounting. In the new African states, Southern Negroes for the first time saw black men not depending on concessions from the white man, but actually taking power. "Power" became a word that was used more and more in the daily conversation of civil rights workers.

More Negroes were running for office than ever before, and some got elected. The end of the county unit system in Georgia (which gave disproportionate political power to rural areas) and the reapportionment of state legislatures was giving more strength to urban areas where many Negroes were already registered. In the fall of 1963 SNCC leader Julian Bond said: "Which is more important, integrating a lunch counter or having four or five Negroes on the City Council where you can change all the laws?"

"Besides," he commented, "I agree with Dick Gregory that some of these Dixie towns aren't worth integrating."

In May, 1965, Bond himself won the Democratic nomination for state legislator in Georgia and is expected to win the general election. This will make him, at 25, one of the first leaders of the sit-in movement to win political office.

In 1965 in Selma, the Rev. James Bevel was saying: "We are no longer fighting for a seat at the lunch counter. . . . We are fighting for seats in the legislature."

The transition from the lunch counter was complete. Yet the road ahead was not clear. Some in the movement felt the vote drive was the real key. "Now we are going after where it's at—that's why they're so mad," said one SNCC staffer after the Selma drive. The active freedom movement was now concentrated in the Deep South—really in a few states, Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, parts of Louisiana, and Arkansas, and mainly in the rural areas. Those who think this is "where it's at" maintain that once Negroes win the vote in the Black Belt repercussions will spread out through the state legislatures, the rest of the Southern states, the Congress and the nation, and that a general growth in democracy will follow. There seems some validity to this theory.

Yet many are not sure. The growing protest movement against discrimination in the North has had a profound effect in the Southern movement. Until a few years ago, there was a widespread naivete about the North among Southern Negroes and white Southern civil rights activists; many believed that it was only in the South that racism, discrimination, and segregation were major problems.

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The growth of the Northern movement shattered these illusions, and it is impossible not to notice that in the North there are no barriers to keep Negroes from voting.

There are no barriers either in most parts of the upper South—nor in many cities even in the Deep South. Yet nowhere can it be said that basic problems have been solved. Many in the movement have become convinced that the vote is not the only key to a new society. Howard Zinn whose writings and teachings have influenced much of the student generation in the South put it bluntly in a speech to SNCC in 1963.

What do you tell people when you ask them to register and vote? Do you tell them, "I want you to register because that's really all that's missing. We have a beautiful working democratic mechanism here. The only problem is that you are left out of it." Well, I don't think this is an honest statement. I think it is truer to say, "If you register and if you vote, you will then have as much power as the rest of us, which is very little."

If freedom is more than a hamburger, the Rev. C.T. Vivian of SCLC once said, it is also more than a ballot.

But what, many people are wondering, and how do you get there?

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5

BLACK AND WHITE TOGETHER?

The Southern civil rights movement has never been all-Negro, nor basically anti-white although sometimes it has come close to being both.

On the other hand, neither has it ever been more than tokenly integrated from the white side.

White opposition to racism, like Negro resistance to oppression, has deep roots in Southern history. The nation's first anti-slavery societies were formed in the East Tennessee mountains, and it was a white man from that area who went to New England and sold William Lloyd Garrison on the idea.

During the Civil War, many white Southerners fought with the Union. Tennessee, for example, had more Union volunteers than any other state. There are Southern counties which flew the Union flag throughout the war. These were in the hill country—as opposed to the flat rich lands with big plantations. It was people from these areas who joined with freed slaves in the Reconstruction governments. They were also the people who united briefly with Negroes in the abortive Populist movement.

By the time of the national ferment of the 1930's, with growing industrialization, there was a new white working class in the cities. Some of these people united, if but temporarily, with Negroes in early CIO efforts. There were also joint Negro-white tenant farmer unions. And, among middle classes and intellectuals, there was considerable activity against racial oppression. Later, in the Southern Conference for Human Welfare, white and Negro united in the beginnings of a real mass movement for change.

By the time the Negro upsurge started in Montgomery in 1955, however, there were very few white people working for civil rights in the South—just as, in the general paralysis of McCarthyism, there were very few people of any color anywhere in America doing anything about social problems. But two Southwide organizations did exist which were concerned with race relations and especially the white Southerner. These were the Southern Regional Council (SRC) and the Southern Conference Educational Fund (SCEF).

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SRC was organized in 1944; it grew partly out of an earlier interracial commission which dated back to the early 1920's. Its purpose was to establish a dialogue between white and Negro and to work for Southern progress. At first it accepted the proposition that progress would have to come within the framework of segregation, but many individuals in SRC felt differently, and in 1953 it adopted a position opposing segregation. Generally SRC worked through influential people. After the 1954 Supreme Court decision, it obtained a foundation grant to establish human relations councils in Southern states and began to bring more people into dialogue across racial lines.

One thing that affected SRC's history was the fact that it was established in 1944 at least in part to be an alternative force to the Southern Conference for Human Welfare (SCHW), which was then growing rapidly. In recent years, criticisms of SCHW from the Center and Right have been over-simplified to charges that it included Communists. At the time SCHW was active, however, "Communist" was not the scare word it became later; there were Communists in many organizations—so the points of real difference among people and organizations were much clearer. Basically the difference between SCHW and SRC boiled down to age-old arguments between radical do-it-now approaches and moderate go-slow-but-steady ways. Some of the people who organized SRC felt that SCHW was trying to move too fast, and would make things worse instead of better. SCHW people felt that SRC was too oriented toward getting things done through manipulation of the power structure, whereas SCHW was committed to "organizing people, any people, not necessarily so-called important people." SCHW supporters felt it was a matter of democracy versus rule by an elite.

In the late 1940's, SCHW went out of existence. This was partly because of attacks from such groups as the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), partly because it over-expanded too quickly and as a result ran into financial difficulties, partly because many of its active members threw themselves into supporting Henry Wallace for President in 1948 and were never, after that failure, able to regroup as a non-political organization. Also, the postwar period was simply not a time for a radical organization, and SCHW was radical.

SCEF was a child of SCHW—having been set up as its educational wing in 1946—and it survived. When SCHW died, Jim Dombrowski, Aubrey Williams, and a few other militant Southerners, white and Negro, decided to continue SCEF. SCHW had pursued a broad program to change the economic and political face of the

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South—support for the labor movement, New Deal programs, etc. Those who continued SCEF decided that the great need at that moment was for a militant organization to unite Negro and white Southerner to oppose segregation. As one of them said later: "We knew there were still many other issues, but we felt that if we could end segregation, we could solve the others." The NAACP was struggling to organize Negroes. SCEF founders saw their main job as reaching white Southerners, finding those ready to speak, letting them know they were not alone, and telling the hesitant that now was the time to take a stand. A small interracial board committed to this ideal was pulled together. Between 1946 and the beginning of the Montgomery bus protest in 1955, SCEF did indeed, even in this unlikely period, encourage many white Southerners to speak against segregation. It maintained the old SCHW perspective of deeming the unknown housewife to be as important as the city official, but gave up any hope of creating a true mass movement at that time.

Immediately after the 1954 Supreme Court decision, SCEF began a series of community conferences over the South for compliance with the decision—the purpose being to bring together Negro and white to implement school desegregation. But by that time, Senator James Eastland of Mississippi had taken the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee to New Orleans for a circus-like investigation of SCEF and had solemnly labelled it a Communist organization, so its effectiveness was crippled. SCEF went ahead with its planned compliance conferences and two were actually held—in Richmond, Virginia, and Houston, Texas. They were well attended and helpful, but SCEF alone was not strong enough to buck the winds rising from the other side. A Southwide compliance conference was scheduled for the fall of 1956 in Atlanta, but by then the White Citizens Councils were firmly in control in the South, and liberals in Atlanta urged SCEF to cancel the conference. SCEF agreed—in the later opinion of some of its leaders, wrongly. That ended any large-scale effort launched by an interracial group to initiate desegregation. By that time, the Montgomery movement had signaled the beginning of a new era—when Negroes took the initiative and demanded freedom for themselves. There was no longer a possibility, for this period, of a truly interracial initiative toward change. After 1955, the role of whites could be only supportive.

Throughout the latter part of the decade both SRC and SCEF, each in its own way, tried to build that support. SRC, through its human relations councils, widened the circle of those who wanted to work quietly and meet in interracial settings, those who wanted to

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maintain their community niches, yet help the freedom movement. SCEF, by and large, sought those who wanted to take a more militant stand, the individual who would join a picket line or in some way identify publicly with the movement—and if necessary cut himself off from old relationships to do it.

Both of these approaches should be distinguished from the role of what came to be known as Southern "moderates." Moderates are people, usually powerful community leaders, who decide that change is inevitable and that they must help their communities adjust in order to avoid turmoil. As one of their spokesmen said in Birmingham in 1963, "Civil unrest is bad for business." Such people sparked save-the-schools movements, formed biracial committees, and tried to promote compromise with the freedom movement. They have often been a positive influence in the South, for they have brought under control the violent racist elements. But they tend to be more interested in peace than in justice and so are not in themselves a force for social change.

In life, such delineations of people tend to blur. Both SRC and SCEF have supported save-the-schools committees, and sometimes the same person who joins them will join the local human relations council, and later even a picket line. But although individuals can pass from one grouping to another, these different approaches are separate and distinct.

To make clear the function of interracial groups in the South, it is necessary also to note additional roles that both SCEF and SRC have played.

In addition to trying to involve whites in action, SCEF tended to become a Southern civil liberties organization. Circumstances forced it into this position because it was itself under heavy attack from groups like HUAC, Senator Eastland's committee, and similar state committees. SCEF leaders did not choose to placate such groups by parroting anti-Communist slogans; they felt that as long as Communism was used as a scare word to attack social movements and close doors to discussion, the Southern movement would be crippled, divided, and surrounded by a multitude of dead-end streets. History in the mid-60's is confirming this theory, for as the freedom movement moves beyond the narrow lunch counter concept, attacks by label and smear intensify. Fortunately, in the early 1960's, other Southern-based groups, SNCC and SCLC, also began supporting the idea of the indivisibility of civil rights and civil liberties. NAACP and CORE never have, and although they too have been labelled "red" by segregationists, some people in them refuse to associate with groups like SCEF and a few have even joined the attacks. The

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reasoning of most of these people is that only if the civil rights movement can defeat the red label can it survive, and to this end it must avoid association with those most often called red. Those who take the civil libertarian approach, on the other hand, argue that the only sound way for the movement to avoid being destroyed by such labels is to put an end to the general atmosphere of witch hunt and thus make it impossible for irrational labels to be used as effective weapons by the segregationists.

Another role that SCEF has played is one of giving support to pioneering movements before they become big enough to attract wide attention. For example, it was SCEF that first mobilized support for besieged voter registration efforts in West Tennessee and sent the first tents there. This pioneering role was possible because SCEF, as an organization under constant attack, was necessarily small—and so was flexible and unencumbered by bureaucracy.

Additional roles played by SRC in this period included a superb program of research which made factual information about the South available in readily usable form.

In the early 1960's, SRC took on another role, when it became a channel for foundation funds that were pouring into the South. As a tax-exempt organization, SRC had always received foundation grants for its own work, and as civil rights activity mushroomed it also channeled funds to other groups. For example, money given by foundations for voter registration were funneled to various organizations through the Voter Education Project (VEP), an arm of SRC.

One of the several dangers of having movements for social change financed by large foundations is that it tends to concentrate power in a few hands. SRC, as a channel for tax-exempt funds, tended to become a self-appointed agency to try to decide which organizations and people were "acceptable" for work in the South. This concentration of power would be dangerous to democracy even if veritable saints were administering it.

But in their role of keeping the white South from being entirely silent in the last decade, SRC and SCEF both did valuable jobs. Additionally there were many incidents of individual heroism—a lone minister, a lone mother, a lone white high school student, who took stands, often without any advance encouragement from any organization. Many of them paid heavily for their witness, and many had to leave the South. But they, along with what organized effort existed, helped keep alive hope for a day when Negro and white would join forces on a large scale. New hope finally came with the student movement of the 1960's.

In the beginning the sit-in movement was almost entirely Negro;

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only a dozen Southern white students showed up at the 1960 SNCC conference. It was SCEF which determined to take the challenge of the movement to the white campuses. In 1961, it set up a white student project by giving SNCC an annual grant to employ full-time staff to try to reach Southern white students. Bob Zellner, a young white Alabaman, was the first full-time worker. Both he and those who came later found it hard to force themselves back to the white campuses; after the vital world of the Negro freedom movement, it is difficult to return to the seemingly dead and corrupt world of uninvolved white society. But they kept doing it anyway, and they influenced by example too, and new ferment spread. By 1964 there was actually more direct action against segregation on predominantly white campuses of the South than on Negro campuses. A strange silence had fallen over the Negro colleges, as SNCC became community-oriented. In the fall of 1964, SNCC began to re-establish contact on Negro campuses, but its orientation was toward pulling students into community involvement.

By that time, white students had set up their own organization, the Southern Student Organizing Committee (SSOC). Some older persons deplored the dual student set-up, but it reflected realities. SSOC people felt like step-children around SNCC—partly because they were white but also because they were still campus-centered, whereas SNCC had left the campus for the "real world." In the fall of 1964, some SNCC leaders encouraged SSOC to organize on Negro campuses also. Negroes came into the leadership of SSOC, and an informal division-of-labor seemed to be shaping up: SSOC was a campus-based organization concerned with what students could do as students about social problems; and SNCC was a body of young community organizers, students only in the sense that they were just out of school or had left temporarily to work in the movement.

The important thing about SSOC is that here is a really sizable movement of Southern whites actively working against segregation. Their conferences have been drawing 150 delegates from more than 40 campuses—and these usually represent scores back home. They are doing such things as touring their states on weekends to recruit more Negro high school students to come to their colleges. They are also, along with Negro students, addressing themselves to such issues as academic freedom, abolition of capital punishment, world peace, and poverty.

One basic thing has been wrong with all the organizations working to move white Southerners—SRC, SCEF, and SSOC. They have touched only the intellectual and professional people, only the middle class. No one in the civil rights movement has been talking to the

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poor white man, the working class white man, urban or rural. What labor movement exists in the South has stayed aloof from the freedom struggle; sometimes its leaders have been privately sympathetic, and have talked to their members, especially on the folly of closing the schools, but this has been about the limit of involvement. Generally, Southern middle-class liberal whites have assumed that white people at the lower economic levels are the most race-prejudiced group—and many Negroes assume it too. There has been much evidence to back up these assumptions—the mobs, the Klan terror, some local unions actually run by the Klan.

Despite all this, the thought has persisted among white Southerners active for civil rights that unless they could break out beyond their own circle, there was no hope of real change. "We're just talking to ourselves," one active person lamented.

With the future effects of automation now looming, this concern becomes more acute. As unemployment rises, is there any possibility of uniting Negro and white to seek a decent living for all—or must there be a fight between white and black for the few jobs that will still exist? If economic conditions worsen, somebody is going to organize impoverished Southern whites. The American labor movement has not. If the civil rights movement doesn't, who will? The potential mass base for a truly organized fascist movement has been obvious for a long time.

An interesting development that came with the formation of SSOC was that some of this new generation of Southern white students began to tackle this problem. "Our job is not to organize the downtrodden Negroes of Mississippi," said Sam Shirah, white Alabama student who conducted the SNCC-SCEF white student project in 1964. "Our job is to organize the downtrodden white people." He continued:

> What about white slums? What about the white unemployed and those working for starvation wages? Our orientation has been wrong—the idea of bringing whites into the movement as it exists. Rather we should bring the movement into the white community of this nation. . . . I want to say that not only are some of my best friends Negro but some of my best friends are white. I want to ask, where is the forgotten white man in his poverty, and where is the movement that is attempting to handle his frustration, . . . to move into the white community and say that the goals of the white man are the same as those of the Negro? Where is the movement that will say to us whites that we are slaves to fear, to hate, to guilt, to an inferiority complex that the Negro has overcome and therefore we must catch up? This is our job.

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Such talk spread through the movement, and many people were talking about this "poor Southern white man," but nobody really knew what he was thinking. Beginning in the summer of 1964, a group of Southern students began a pilot project in Mississippi—of all places—to find this white Southerner in the flesh. It was slow going: they learned more about how not to proceed than they accomplished. But it was a beginning. The most important thing they found out was that it was not so much anti-Negro prejudice that would keep the poor white man away from the freedom movement as the fact that he was living in a police state.

"We found that we could canvass successfully in the white community for the Freedom Democratic Party, even in integrated teams," said a report from the summer pilot project in Biloxi, Mississippi. "The reaction of the people was not generally hostile but rather neutral. . . . It is quite a shock to realize that these were the same people who attacked Negroes with chains at the beach wade-in of 1960. . . . Groups are more immoral than individuals."

Later teams of young people attempting to organize white day laborers in Mississippi farm country initially met enthusiastic response and a desire to work with Negro farmers. "If these people were prejudiced, they hid it well," said Bruce Maxwell, one of the students.

The entire situation changed and this particular effort failed when the landlords of the white farmers ordered the students away and pressure started from the sheriff's office. The white farmers then also asked the students to leave. Their fear was stronger than their need.

In the face of this reaction, some students have become discouraged. Others are convinced they must keep on.

"We must find a way to face the problem of fear of the poor white people," Maxwell wrote. "Retreat to the Negro community is destructive to our courage and to theirs. We must stay. Negro organizers encountered the same fears when they first went into the Negro communities. But they stayed and they overcame, and that is what we must do."

Some people feel that such efforts may go easier in places other than Mississippi, but this is problematical. Elsewhere pressures may be more subtle, but nowhere in the South do people in control want the poor Negro and the poor white to join forces. Much of Southern history has been a record of efforts to keep this from happening.

An attempt to build such unity is just beginning in the Southern Appalachian region. There several civil rights groups (SCEF, SCLC, SNCC, Highlander, and SSOC) are sponsoring the Appalachian Economic and Political Action Conference (AEPAC). This will try

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to stimulate community-union organization of white and Negro unemployed and underemployed to demand permanent unemployment compensation of at least $60 a week, better medical and educational facilities, a voice in local politics, etc. This could have wide repercussions since nine Southern states have large Appalachian areas: Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Kentucky, West Virginia, and Maryland. All but the last three also have Black Belt areas where the civil rights movement is concentrating. The significance of simultaneous organization in the Black Belt and Appalachian areas for future politics in these states is obvious.

No one knows whether it will work—this effort to unite the poor, regardless of color. All odds seem to be against it. It was tried during Reconstruction and failed; it was tried during the Populist movement and failed. W.J. Cash, writing his classic *Mind of the South* in the late 1930's, noted that in both of these instances, when the chips were down, the poor Southern white fled back to the false glory of his white skin rather than unite with his black brother. Cash predicted dismally that this would happen again with the then embryonic Negro-white unity of the early CIO. And of course later it did. Why, one might ask, should it be different in the 1960's?

There are some possible reasons. If automation brings the profound changes in the economy that are predicted, the economic needs of the white man may for the first time be greater than his need to feel superior to the Negro. Another difference today is the image that the benighted white man sees when he looks at the Negro. Before, he saw a slave or a servant. Today he sees a man standing straight and tall, marching on Washington 250,000-strong, marching on Montgomery 30,000-strong, welded into a movement with strength to shake the nation. The downtrodden white man may see that he too needs that strength. Support for this theory came in 1964 when a committee of unemployed white miners from Kentucky went to Washington to lobby for attention to their needs. They were inspired to go by the 1963 civil rights March on Washington; and they headed straight for the Washington SNCC office for help in finding their way around official Washington.

These trends offer hope, provided vision is combined with hard work. Meantime, the comparative handful of white Southerners who have in the past 10 years stood up to be counted have kept the door open.

White people from other parts of the country have helped too. It was in 1962 that SNCC brought the first white students from the

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North to live and work in the South. Charles Sherrod took them to the rural areas of Southwest Georgia to work alongside Negro students, and everybody thought he was attempting the impossible. "We've been singing long enough about 'Black and White Together,'" one student said. "We have to practice it, live it, and as we do we make real a certain kind of dream."

The terror in Southwest Georgia was no greater than in Mississippi, where at that time virtually no whites were working, and soon more white students began to come South. By 1964 it was a national movement.

And there were the white martyrs: William Moore, who attempted his own freedom walk through Alabama in 1962; Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner in Mississippi in 1964; the Rev. James Reeb and Mrs. Viola Liuzzo in Alabama in 1965.

One wonders how many white Americans realize how much they owe these people—and some others who have given up their lives in little pieces in the committed drudgery of the Southern front lines? As Southern racism has become more overt in the face of the growing Negro movement, it is little short of a miracle that the movement has not become completely anti-white. If there remains any hope that this country can some day transcend color lines it exists because of the blood, sweat, and sacrifice of these people who died or offered their lives. And at best all they bought is time.

The attitudes towards whites among Southern Negroes in the movement would require a study in itself. Organized black nationalist movements were not important in the South until about two years ago. Since then, they have grown. They are still not the mainstream of Southern protest, but many more Negroes agree with their tenets than actually join them.

One important thing to remember is that the Southern movement is not—except in the minds of a few people—an integration movement. For a time many white people thought it was. The changing semantics of the movement are revealing. In the 1930's and early 1940's, when people spoke of Negro oppression and what to do about it, favorite words were "justice" and "equal rights." The term "civil rights" came into use during the 1940's. Then, more people realized that there could be no equality within segregation and the term "desegregation" became popular. Later, some people who looked farther down the road, talked about "integration." They said desegregation meant the breaking down of legal barriers, whereas integration meant a positive acceptance of people by each other. The word scared timid white liberals, but others pointed out that it meant "to make whole." The term finally gained

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general usage and the movement was often called "the integration movement." But in the past three years (simultaneously, perhaps not incidentally, with the growing awareness of the new Africa in the Southern movement) the popular term has become "freedom movement," and this much more clearly expresses what the Negro is struggling for in the South.

"I don't think I'd ever walk down to the next block again to stand in line and try to integrate a white theater or a restaurant," said one militant young leader in Mississippi in late 1964. He had stood in many such lines in previous years.

What changed him? One thing was that the battle over the theater and restaurant was by then won in so many places, and he and thousands like him put into words what they had always known: that even if they had the money to go to these places, which most of them didn't, they really had very little desire to go. They certainly had no desire to be near white people because they were white, and many had a definite desire not to be. What they wanted to be in was a new world, a new society—and they had attacked the segregated public places not so much to get into them as because they seemed to stand as barriers between them and that new world. It was a Southern variation of the widely articulated feeling among Negro intellectuals that they do not care to be integrated into a rotten society.

The other thing that had happened to that young man in Mississippi was that as the movement intensified it led the Southern racist to bare the teeth of his viciousness. The older paternalism in the South took many and subtle forms and had convinced even militant Negroes of a potential decency in the white population that didn't come through very well when the chips were down.

"I used to think we could reach the conscience of the good white people," that young man in Mississippi said. "That was when I still thought there were some good white people."

And yet the dream of unity persists, buried deep beneath the frustrations, even when everything in the outside world denies it. A reporter, interviewing this same young man, referred in passing to his previous discussion of political action as "a program to elect Negroes to office."

"I didn't say elect Negroes to office," he interrupted. "I said elect good people to office."

"But you said earlier that there aren't any good white people," the reporter reminded him.

He looked startled and said almost wistfully, "But there *must* be some good ones somewhere."

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There is real truth in the observation of the Southern historian, James McBride Dabbs, that "through the processes of history we have been made one people, and . . . it is disastrous to talk and act as if we were two."

Underneath, this is true, but the twin evils of oppression and paternalism run too deep for this unity to surface now. Before there can be any real integration, there must be victory for the Negro's freedom movement. Jim Forman, referring to Albany, Georgia, but in phrases that could apply all over the South, calls it the "breach before healing."

And if integration does come in the South, it is doubtful that it will grow out of any of the situations where token desegregation of Negroes has taken place. There is more chance of it in situations of "reverse integration," where a few whites have entered the Negro world (formerly Negro colleges that have desegregated or predominantly Negro neighborhoods where a few white people live) because Negroes are more likely to extend acceptance to the token whites among them than whites do to token Negroes. But even this has its shortcomings. Negro communities too take on all the values of the larger society, and this society inherently divides people along racial lines.

The greatest hope for real integration is for an expansion of the freedom movement itself until its spirit pervades wider and wider sections of the population. This movement is something like an embryo of a new society already growing within the old. It is a fact that the nearest thing to real integration today has taken place within the freedom movement.

This does not mean that all is sweetness and light in Negro-white relationships inside the movement. There are many tensions. Whites in the movement have made many mistakes. Most Negroes have ambivalent feelings about having them there even if they made absolutely no mistakes. Many Negroes who believe in principle that it should be "black and white together" feel that they have been deprived of everything else in America and that the freedom movement at least should be theirs. Yet there is something healthy about the way these problems are being met within the movement, because they are out in the open. The most perceptive people, both Negro and white, realize that they will not really be resolved in their generation, and probably not in the lifetimes of their children, but they continue to try. And sometimes in the heat of battle, under pressure of great sacrifice and great commitment, true human relationships between individuals do develop, even if temporarily. It is a start. It is enough to prove it can be done. It has created a new

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kind of brotherhood that no one quite defines but that everyone in the movement knows exists, a brotherhood that one belongs to without joining any particular organization, without paying any dues, without signing any pledge, but which one knows one is a part of without wasting time talking about it, and whose other members one can always recognize across barriers of race, geography, and age.

Regardless of court orders, regardless of the mass marches, regardless of token desegregation, wherever you go in the Southern and border states there are still two worlds—a white world and a Negro world—as there probably are also in most places in the North. But for those who have found this invisible brotherhood of the committed there is what some have called a "world in-between." It exists nowhere in geography, but its existence is nonetheless real. To live in it demands a certain price of both Negro and white, but those who really want to can find it and can live in it—not just for a summer, not just for a few months, but for a lifetime if they wish.

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6

NONVIOLENCE: PACIFIER OR POWER?

There has been a great deal written and spoken, pro and con, about nonviolence and violence in the Southern movement. Much of it has been nonsense.

Sometimes the advocates of the differing points of view seem to be speaking different languages, and neither comprehends what the other is saying. Consequently, the dispute takes place in a distorted context.

Criticism of nonviolence found its first nationally heard Southern spokesman in Robert Williams of Monroe, North Carolina. Williams served in the Marine Corps during the Korean War and came home determined to do something about the plight of Monroe Negroes. He became president of the local NAACP chapter and built it into a thriving organization. The Ku Klux Klan intensified activity and rode through the Negro section of Monroe shooting indiscriminately. Whereupon Williams and other Negroes armed themselves and got a charter from the National Rifle Association, which Williams knew about through his Marine connections. One night when the Klan shot into the community, Negroes shot back, and after that, Williams claims, Klan attacks declined.

There was virtually no press notice of this gunfire exchange.

Meantime, the "kissing case" arose—the case of two young Negro boys who were kissed by a little white girl and found themselves jailed. Williams had been a public relations officer in the Marine Corps and knew how to get news to the outside world. He organized a world-wide campaign of protest, which freed the Negro boys. That made Williams himself national news and so the world was watching when in 1959, in a state of fury and frustration over dismissal of charges against two white men who had attacked Negro women, he told reporters: "The demonstration today shows that the Negro in the South cannot expect justice in the courts. He must convict his attackers on the spot. He must meet violence with violence, lynching with lynching."

The important thing about the Robert Williams story is not

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that Williams was so unique but that he was rather typical of his generation. Many young Negroes went home to organize after the Second World War and the Korean War, and many did. Williams may have been unusually capable, but others were too. Certainly the arming of Negro communities was neither new nor unusual. Most Negro homes in the South have guns in them (as do most white homes, especially in rural areas) and they have been used to scare off racist attacks. What really made Williams different was his knowledge of how to use publicity as a weapon for justice. He used this knowledge with a high degree of skill and astuteness in the kissing case, and that is why the world knew about him when he made his statement about violence.

After that, he became a symbol—of the Negro striking back. This frightened many white people, and they frightened many Negroes, who denounced Williams publicly and said privately that what he had said was right but that his mistake had been to say it. In the resulting emotion, rational discussion of Williams' position was virtually impossible.

What he said, when analyzed, was simply that people should defend themselves when attacked. Williams stated specifically that he did not advocate aggressive violence—that is, Negroes attacking white people. Since Williams first became news, other people and groups have advocated similar policies. A few have called for retaliatory violence—that is, a murder of a white man to pay for the murder of a Negro, or burning of a white church to repay the burning of a Negro church. But no one, at least publicly, has called for mass armed uprising, and most people who consider themselves opposed to nonviolence simply call for self-defense. This means a man prepared to defend his home and family with a shotgun if necessary, and, as Williams refined it, a community organized to defend itself collectively. It was Williams' stated belief that such community organization would actually decrease the amount of violence because, he said, if the racists knew a community was armed they would not attack. This is a deterrent theory on the community level.

None of these positions is compatible with a completely pacifist philosophy, but the self-defense aspect is completely compatible with traditional practice in America. Self-defense has always been acceptable in this country, both legally and in the court of public opinion. And the deterrent theory is, of course, the officially proclaimed basis of United States policy in international affairs. Therefore it is impossible not to conclude that there was a great deal of hypocrisy in the condemnation that descended on Robert Williams.

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As for retaliatory violence, this is beyond the limits of legality, but it is strange that so few people have noted how remarkable it is, in the face of continued violence against Negroes in the South, that there have been so few instances of it. In the words of John Lewis (himself an advocate of nonviolence): "We are in the midst of a revolution. If it were going on somewhere else in the world, people wouldn't even expect it to be nonviolent."

Unfortunately, critics of the self-defense school have tended simply to condemn and not to discuss. The net result in the case of Williams was that he was made an outcast by powerful civil rights groups; local, state, and federal officials knew this, and consequently Monroe Negroes were denied even meager police protection. This reinforced their belief that they must depend on their own resources for self-defense. That was a vicious circle if there ever was one.

On the other hand, if there has been much misunderstanding of the self-defense position, there has likewise been among its advocates much misunderstanding of what the nonviolent direct-action movement is about. One paradox is that a chief target of attack for many advocates of self-defense is Martin Luther King, Jr., although King is one of the few of Williams's critics who was willing to engage in a rational discussion of the matter, instead of simply condemning blindly. One of the most enlightening discussions in print on the issue appeared in 1959 in the magazine *Liberation*, an exchange between Williams and King. They disagreed, of course, but there is an integrity about the discussion because both seem to say what they mean.

Among the popular misconceptions held by critics of nonviolence have been the beliefs that this is an attempt to "disarm Southern Negroes" so that they have no way to defend themselves, that it means submission in the face of racism (the picture of Negroes praying instead of resisting, for example), and that nonviolence as a philosophy is "draining the militance out of Southern Negroes."

Leaving aside any philosophic arguments, these ideas simply do not square with the facts in the Southern struggle over the last decade. As for "disarming" Negroes, there are a very few individuals in the movement who maintain a position of complete pacifism and refuse to keep arms in their homes. But the organized nonviolent movement has not said to any individual that he must remove the gun from his house. The position of the movement is that this is an individual question. What the movement does say is that in actions of organized social struggle, participants must adhere to nonviolence—

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that is, when marching to the courthouse, for example, you leave your weapons, if any, at home.

As for draining away militance, the record in the South shows the exact opposite. Nonviolent direct action did not arise in the South as a counter to violence among Negroes; rather it arose, in Montgomery and elsewhere, as a counter to court and legislative action. It arose among people who decided that these methods were too slow. So they put their bodies into the streets, and on to lunch counter stools, into voting lines. Thus, nonviolence as it developed in the South was a weapon—a weapon of action, which the people picked up and with which they moved against the status quo. Follow the stories of many of the new Negro leaders and it is clear that nonviolence came into their lives as the weapon they had long been looking for. "I always knew I had to do something about the system and that there must be some way," says John Lewis, who grew up in Troy, Alabama. "In nonviolent direct action, I found a way."

The history of the South since 1955 is a story of community after community that has been stirred to action by nonviolence. Where nonviolent direct action took place, change in some form followed. The change may be limited in scope, if the original demands were limited, but the change that came was real. Negroes hold their heads high and demand respect; if public places are open, they use them occasionally even if not steadily. In contrast, in communities where change has been decreed by court order or by some bi-racial committee appointed by officials, the picture is different. Public places may be open in theory, but they are likely to be little used, and there is much less independence among the Negro population. Nonviolent direct action has provided a method by which each individual can become a part of the struggle and thus be emancipated from within as he seeks emancipation without.

One of the most unfair criticisms that is sometimes made of Martin Luther King, Jr., is that he destroys militance in the Negro communities. Again the opposite is true. There are grounds on which King and his work can be criticized, but this is not one of them. When he goes into a Southern community, people are aroused—not quieted down. People come to the mass meeting who sat home before. After hearing him, they walk into the street and risk danger and death to challenge the system. If anything, negative effects of King's leadership cut entirely the other way, because the problem in the South has not been King coming into a community and draining the militance away but communities sitting months or years and letting their militance fritter away while they wait hopefully for King to come and lead them. This has happened in too many places.

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Whether King can be blamed for it is questionable. It is more likely the fault of local leadership and the traditional dependence on leadership that has too long pervaded society generally.

Critics of nonviolence have sometimes used the word "non-resistance" interchangeably with "nonviolence." Among Southern militants, the phrase is "nonviolent action" or "nonviolent direct action." To them, nonviolence has not been non-resistance; it has been the essence of resistance. Even those pictures of masses of people praying have been misinterpreted in some quarters. They are praying all right, but when hundreds of people kneel to pray in the middle of a highway in Alabama this is not prayer in the traditional sense of leaving the problem to a divine power. Not that the prayers are not sincere with many of the participants; many would tell you quickly that prayer is the source of their own strength. But with their appeal to a divine power they are merging the commitment of their bodies. And their prayer becomes a virtual roadblock, figuratively as well as literally, in the way of the racists. Prayer too, in this instance, is resistance.

Nonviolent direct action, as it has been used in the South, essentially means resistance to segregation and racism. First this resistance operates on the individual level. It is power that an individual generates from within (or according to the belief of some participants, with the help of a divine power) which enables him to stand up and say "no" to oppression. The Rev. James Lawson tells the story of a student, Paul Laprad: "He was hauled off a lunch counter stool by a group of white men, beaten, kicked, and clobbered over the head. As his assailants left, he stood up, brushed himself off and returned to the lunch counter stool." This, Lawson says, is nonviolence. Or there was Miss Annelle Ponder, described by Howard Zinn after an arrest in Mississippi. She was brutally beaten and when her friends came to get her they found her with a face so swollen that she could hardly talk. But she looked up at her friends and said one word: "Freedom." This, too, was nonviolence.

Such resistance by one individual may or may not be effective in changing a community. Sometimes it can be (the case of Rosa Parks is the prototype), but at the very least, in the thinking of advocates of nonviolence, it regenerates the individual. He becomes a resister instead of a submissive victim, gains new inner dignity, and becomes a whole human being.

But when such tactics of resistance are used by great numbers of people at the same time they take on an additional dimension. They become a very conscious weapon of social struggle, of defying tyranny and taking the offensive against it. They are a form of

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attack on unjust conditions, in which the attackers use every means at their disposal—their voices, their feet, their bodies, and the mass weight of their very numbers—every means except physical violence, to destroy the system that they oppose.

In their most refined form, these tactics on an organized scale amount to what nonviolent actionists call "social dislocation." This means that by your nonviolent actions you so dislocate a community, a state, or the nation (or the world?) that it can no longer operate and therefore must grant your demands. The Southern movement since 1955 has been a series of minor "social dislocations." The bus protest in Montgomery, for example, dislocated that city so much that it was finally simpler for those in control to let the buses be desegregated than to fight it any longer. The student sit-ins "dislocated" the South enough so that segregated lunch counters no longer seemed important enough to preserve. The Southern movement as a whole has "dislocated" the nation sufficiently to make great numbers of people conclude that some changes must be made.

It can be seen, however, that all of these things are still merely toying with the method of social dislocation as it is presented by its most convinced advocates. The Southern movement has talked about "Freedom Now," but it has never really tried to throw a community or the region into nonviolent turmoil and keep it there until all the demands for Freedom were truly granted *Now*. It has extracted concession after concession from those in power—but never has it tried to continue the dislocation until the very seat of power was shifted. As Jim Lawson said, the movement thus far has sought mainly "concessions from the system, not to transform the system." People who talk seriously about "nonviolent revolution" believe that the Southern movement has hardly yet touched the techniques of nonviolent direct action.

There is yet another dimension to nonviolence that is also often misunderstood. This is the concept of love—or love of one's enemies. Most people in the Southern movement make no claim to loving their enemies. They say frankly that they see nonviolence merely as a tactic that sometimes works well, and when it quits working well they will turn to something else. But there are the minority (and they have often been in leadership) who see nonviolence as a "way of life," as they put it. With those who take this position, the concept of love has meaning.

It is not, however, affection for the individual one is fighting. Rather, it is an attempt to understand his corruption and the source of it and to see the evil as something that has made him its victim too. Even more basically, it is a way of looking at one's op-

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ponent which holds out the possibility of ultimate reconciliation—not, it should be emphasized, through compromise but through transformation. Theoretically this possibility exists with every human being, and there have been instances in which jailers, sheriffs, and hoodlums who have been brutal to civil rights demonstrators have shown signs of change through association with their victims. These cases of individual transformation are rare, however, and there are few people in the Southern movement who really think there can be enough such private conversions to make a social change.

The more general belief is in a process of social transformation—that is, that in destroying the evil society by nonviolent direct action the protesters will build a new society in which decent human relationships are possible. Someone once asked Rev. Fred Shuttlesworth, one of the most uncompromising leaders in the Southern movement, what he was working for in Birmingham. He thought a few minutes and replied: "For the day when the man who beat me and my family with chains at Phillips High School can sit down with us as a friend." It is unlikely that Shuttlesworth expects ever to sit down with that particular man. But he has a vision of a society in which people like that man and people like himself can sit down together. It is this kind of vision that fires the imagination of some Negroes in the movement when there is talk of the possibility of an alliance of poor white and Negro—even though they have seen at first hand no evidence that it can work. They have a vision of the kind of world they are working for. This is what is meant when they talk about the "beloved community."

Some people unfamiliar with the Southern movement are repulsed by that phrase. They think it sounds sticky, sentimental, and hollow. But it doesn't at all on the lips of the right people. Not on the lips of C.T. Vivian or John Lewis, for example, both of whom use it often. When someone has walked into countless mobs and been beaten and jailed again and again, each time only to return from a sickbed to the struggle, when he has lived like that for a vision of a new kind of world, it does not sound sticky at all to hear him describe what he is working for as "the beloved community."

Or some people put it in economic terms without even identifying them as that. "I don't want to be like the white man, because what he got he stole from me," said Mrs. Fannie Lou Hamer, Mississippi Delta leader in one of her first speeches outside Mississippi. "What I want is a world where what I got, there won't nobody have to steal from me because there'll be enough for everybody."

The sense of fighting for a new kind of world where there can be a new kind of relationship grips thousands in the Southern move-

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ment who would not describe themselves as "loving their enemies." Thus one of the ultimate values of the nonviolent philosophy has influenced masses in the movement, beyond its conscious advocates. Bitter hatred of the white world is certainly prevalent among Southern Negroes, but it is less prevalent among those in the movement, and this is not because anybody has drained away their militancy, which they obviously possess in abundance, and not usually because they have any conscious feeling of loving their enemies. Rather it is because they have been fired by a vision of a different world and have little time or energy left for hating. Hatred has not been eliminated, but it is no longer the dominant passion of their lives. There is a school of thought that holds that hatred must be encouraged in oppressed people to give them the will and the drive to resist. In this movement, it has been shown that a positive vision can also supply that drive.

There are weaknesses in the nonviolent movement too, however. Although it came onto the Southern scene as a positive weapon, powerful people in America and their press did not understand it that way. They got the idea, many of them, that this was a nice sweet movement that was going to keep peace in the South, and they began to sing its praises and to heap adulation on its leaders. There has been the persistent danger that nonviolent leaders would themselves become bewitched by this nice, peaceful image of themselves and, unconsciously, try to conform to it. If that happens, nonviolence will indeed become what those who have caricatured it say it is: a movement to keep people quiet and debilitate them. Its critics to the contrary, that has not happened yet. Regardless of what his critics say, this softening-up process has not yet happened to Martin Luther King, Jr. It could happen someday. The pressures on him to become a control, a harness on a mass movement are almost irresistibly powerful; sometimes it seems he will have to be almost superhuman not to give in, but so far the movement King leads in the South is attacking, not pulling back.

One key to keeping it that way is for the nonviolent movement to keep concentrating on its power as an aggressive technique and not let itself be diverted into the role of counterforce to any violent outbursts. For example, it would be most regrettable for the future of nonviolence if this movement let itself be pushed into preaching nonviolence to such groups as the "deacons of defense" in Louisiana which received publicity this spring. The deacons are an armed community guard of the type Robert Williams advocated, which was set up to counter unbridled Klan terror in rural Louisiana.

As long as violence by racists persists, groups like this are going

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to appear. People who feel that their existence increases the danger of open armed conflict between white and black can best spend their energies insisting that local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies act to stop anti-Negro violence. It is not the role of the organized nonviolent movement, if it wants to stay a militant aggressive force, to attempt to cope with this situation by urging the Negroes to disarm. Rather let the people who believe in law and order, whether pacifist or not, insist that racists in the area be disarmed; and let the nonviolent movement continue to carry out aggressive attacks on the status quo and continue to prove that its weapons are more creative than guns.

Another key to whether the nonviolent movement continues to be aggressive lies in whether it broadens its battle to attack effectively what is wrong with economic and political structures. Sometimes, nonviolent leaders have been frightened by the effects of their own movement—when it seemed that masses of people set in motion could not always be counted on to remain nonviolent. An example of this was the night in Birmingham in 1963 when, in the wake of bombings of Negro homes, Negroes fought police with bottles. The people who threw bottles were not the same people who had defied fire hoses and police dogs to demonstrate. They were the very poor and disinherited (those who demonstrated were mostly poor too, but these others were the ones who had lost all hope), and they were striking out at the most visible sign of their oppression—the police. Some people saw their spontaneous outburst as potential revolution. It was not that, because they were not organized and had no program. They had not stayed away from the organized freedom movement because it was nonviolent, but because they saw no answers to their problems there. Their attitudes have been echoed in many a community where Negroes living in the worst slums have watched the sit-in movement and said, "Who cares? What I want is a job."

The nonviolent movement does not have to turn violent to win the allegiance of those who threw bottles at Birmingham and elsewhere, but it does have to develop a program radical enough to speak to their needs. Some people in the movement see this. Whether the movement as presently constituted will rise to this challenge remains to be seen.

But to make the question of nonviolence versus violence the starting point for a discussion of the current South, as many do, is to begin at the wrong point. The first question now is whether the freedom movement will be on the offensive or the defensive. There probably cannot be any large social movement without some violence occurring, but it is difficult to see what possibility for an offensive

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violence offers the movement. The very terminology of critics of nonviolence is otherwise. They talk about self-defense. Self-defense among Southern Negroes is not new. Guns in the homes of Southern Negroes have been the rule, not the exception. Even retaliatory violence is not new. Dr. Herman Long, president of Talladega College in Alabama, recalls that when he was a small boy in Birmingham right after the First World War there was a time of great anti-Negro terror and Birmingham Negroes formed an organization to strike back. They vowed that for each Negro killed, they would kill a white man. For a time they did. This may have discouraged some of the terror, but it didn't free the Birmingham Negro or change his life much. The movement for freedom did not start until Birmingham Negroes moved onto the streets in mass in an offensive against the status quo. They did that with the weapon of nonviolence.

It is difficult to see what comparable mass weapons for offense violence can offer the Southern movement unless someone is ready to propose the mounting of a true armed uprising, and no one has really suggested that.

In the fall of 1964, there was a reign of terror against Negroes in McComb, Mississippi—houses being bombed and freedom workers arrested on the slightest pretext. One night some Negroes became angry and began throwing bottles, but the terror went on and more people were arrested. There was discussion throughout the movement in Mississippi as to what could be done.

The question in this situation, as one nonviolent leader pointed out, was not so much whether the movement should be violent or nonviolent but how it could get on the offensive.

"A few bottles thrown one night—that's not an offensive," he said. "The movement there is completely on the defensive. It is not doing anything. They are just picking our people off. We've got mass arrests, but no mass movement."

This man said he thought nonviolence had an aggressive answer for that situation and similar ones. "I'd like to see Negroes there organize and say to the community: 'Look we have had enough—enough bombings, enough terror. We will not take it anymore. We will not strike back with violence. But we will paralyze your city. We will stay home from our jobs, we will block the highways into the city with our bodies, we will lie down on your streets. Nothing will move in this city.' "

And then, the man said, they should do it. He pointed out that it would not take all the Negroes in the community to make this kind of action effective. The more the better, but even a minority can cause a lot of "social dislocation."

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That kind of action calls for much organization and commitment. But so does an armed uprising. The kind of nonviolent revolutionary action described here has been talked about often in the South; it has never really been tried. Whether the nonviolent movement in its present form is ready to try remains a question. But until it is tried, the question remains as to whether it makes sense, even in desperation, to talk about violent revolution.

To many watching and participating in the Southern movement—and contemplating a world which has brought itself to the brink of destruction by violence—it seems insane to scorn a course of action which may offer a way to achieve social change without death and destruction, especially when the varied possibilities of this method have only begun to be tried.

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7

THE UNANSWERED QUESTIONS

A Marxist making his first visit South a few years ago sat in on a meeting of young civil rights workers. Later he said:

I've been in many meetings but I never saw people quite like these. No heroics, nobody talking to hear his own voice, people listening to each other, willing to sit long hours until a problem is solved. We've read about how revolutions in other countries make a new kind of person out of those who take part in them. I always wondered if it was true. Now I know it is.

A Christian minister who worked in Albany, Georgia, during the movement there tells this story:

It was hot and stifling; they were crowding people into jail cells like animals. There were 30 women in one tiny cell, and all day they had nothing to eat or drink. Finally in the evening, a jail trusty slipped them a single glass of water. Nobody grabbed it, nobody gulped. Slowly they passed it among them and each woman took a sip. I've been in many churches where they held something they called the communion service, and it didn't mean a thing. To me, there in that jail cell, was the Holy Communion.

What the Marxist and the minister were commenting on, each in his own terms, describes the first and foremost accomplishment of the Southern freedom movement to date: it has created new people. Not all are saints, by any means, but they have been able to achieve a human level that is far beyond the norm in the society of the United States today.

The second solid accomplishment of the movement is that it has created a powerful social force, one of the few great mass movements in the nation's history. It has pulled great numbers of people together, made them a cohesive force, and shaken the country.

And the third accomplishment is that the movement has achieved virtually all of the specific goals it has thus far set for itself: It desegregated the buses; it opened the lunch counters; it eliminated all-white waiting rooms; it desegregated the restaurants, theaters, hotels, and other public accommodations; and now it is winning the

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vote. Not all of these battles have been won everywhere, but in the main they have been achieved. This is something people who criticize the movement and stress its shortcomings forget. It has gotten everything it asked for so far. Maybe it has just not asked for enough.

When the thousands of freedom marchers entered into Montgomery on March 25, 1965, and walked through the streets where Montgomery Negroes live and then down Dexter Avenue to the state capitol of Alabama, suddenly there was dramatized all that is right and all that is wrong with the freedom movement.

Here where direct action was first practiced almost 10 years ago was the largest demonstration yet seen in the South for Negro freedom. Montgomery Negroes walked alone in 1955, but now on the same streets walked thousands from every corner of the nation, black and white, Protestant, Catholic, Jew, and atheist, young and old. This was a movement that people were willing to travel thousands of miles and to die for if necessary. It was a movement they were willing to spend long hours in unsung drudgery for. It was a movement that seemed to harness all that was best in America, and it was powerful.

Yet, as they walked through the streets of Montgomery, the marchers passed mute testimony to the oppression the civil rights movement has not yet touched; for most of Montgomery's Negro population live in poverty, and many of the Negroes who came out to watch the march that day (and some to join it) came from dilapidated and primitive homes in the back alleys and the dirt streets.

It is not that nothing has been accomplished in Montgomery since 1955. The restaurants are open, hotels are open, the Greyhound bus station has only one waiting room, token desegregation has started in the schools—all things that 10 years ago many people white and black would have said were impossible in Montgomery.

But none of this alters the fact that the movement has not yet touched the things most Negroes need most: a decent place to live and the income to live adequately.

A Montgomery Negro leader, describing conditions there just a few months before the giant march, noted that if a Negro father was earning $40 a week he was doing well. Jobs for Negroes above the menial level are virtually non-existent. Most working women are in domestic service, making $16 to $18 a week.

And these conditions, in varying degrees, are what prevail in Negro communities across the South—and in much of the rest of the country.

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This does not mean the freedom movement has failed. It only means its work has just begun.

Now the question is how can it go on from here, how can the powerful momentum it has built be directed to solving some of the basic problems that plague society?

This is a question which alert civil rights activists are well aware of. For several years it has been the subject of discussion anywhere people in the movement meet.

"Of what advantage is it to the Negro," asked Martin Luther King, Jr. in his address to the 1964 SCLC convention, "to establish that he can be served in integrated restaurants or accommodated in integrated hotels if he is bound to the kind of financial servitude which will not allow him to take a vacation or even take his wife out to dinner? . . . What will it profit him to be able to send his children to an integrated school if the family income is insufficient to buy them school clothes?

"What is at stake," Jim Forman told a meeting in the Alabama Black Belt early in 1965, "is political power. But it's more than political. It's economic exploitation. You make $18 a week and the white man makes $65 a week. So now we have to demonstrate, but we also have to organize. Like the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party. . . . You've got to hold these meetings where you can talk about economics and politics as well as your spiritual well-being."

The problems the freedom movement is up against are essentially the same problems that confront the whole society—only more so. The movement leaders know that too. It was King who also noted that although a greater percentage of Negroes than whites live in poverty, 78 percent of the nation's poverty-stricken families are white (by the government's measuring rod of an under-$3,000-a-year income, which is unrealistically low).

Many people in the freedom movement also realize that programs like President Johnson's "war on poverty" are in the category of going to fight an enemy army with a pea-shooter. The new government programs may get a few jobless young men off the streets temporarily and into a Job Corps; they may do something toward providing pre-school training in slum areas, etc. But they are not going to change the basic conditions of men's lives. And as a matter of fact, unless people organize independently to exercise control over these programs and make them their own, these federal efforts are likely to become channels through which existing corrupt political structures can keep control of the very people who are supposed to benefit from them.

Something more basic is needed, and many active people sense

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that too. SNCC workers at a 1963 conference heard one of the strategists of the nonviolent movement, Bayard Rustin, say: "When we asked for the right to ride the buses in dignity in Montgomery, we could—with a certain amount of social dislocation—get what we asked, because the seats were available. When we asked for the right to eat in a restaurant we could get that too, because there was room in the restaurant. But with jobs it's different. We are not going to get that which does not exist, and the jobs do not exist."

But despite such discussions—and there have been many of them—no one has yet found a way to bring to bear on these problems the tremendous power of the freedom movement.

In the absence of a program big enough to meet the needs that many sense, there are some obvious pitfalls that a social movement encounters. In the July, 1962, issue of *Harper's Magazine,* John Fischer, its editor, wrote a much-discussed article on what he called the need for a "first-class citizens' council" among Negroes. He said that the civil rights battle was virtually won (in 1962, he said this, no less) and that there was need for Negro leaders to recognize the great educational and cultural lag among masses of Negroes and do something about them. Although Fischer disclaimed such notions, the article definitely smacked of the idea that the Negro must "raise" himself to a certain level in order to "earn" the right to freedom. Civil rights leaders were infuriated and said so in numerous forums. Yet over the past three years, a rather curious thing has happened: the civil rights movement in some places is coming very close to doing what Fischer advocated. Tutorial programs in the slums, day nurseries for working mothers, youth programs designed to combat juvenile delinquency are very much "the thing" now both South and North. Often they are sponsored by civil rights groups; or people formerly active in civil rights work have drifted into them.

In the absence of any real change in society, such programs may be needed, but unless they are tied to an organized effort through which people can move to take control of their own destiny their value even to the individual affected is doubtful. For example, the freedom schools in Mississippi opened new horizons for many people because through them people found their way to the Freedom Democratic Party; this gave them a political voice in a movement that was trying to change the society that had thwarted them. A tutorial project in a slum, unrelated to any freedom movement, may be just a dead end, even for its participants. One of the most significant sociological facts that has come to light in the freedom movement is that wherever a direct action project has gripped an

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entire community (from Montgomery to Birmingham) both juvenile delinquency and crime in the Negro community have fallen to virtually zero. People fighting for basic changes in their lives have a reason to live and a reason to learn. Can these drives ever be created artificially?

The Urban League is proposing gigantic government-sponsored development programs in Negro communities. But can such programs be truly meaningful when they are built from the top down? Those administering the present anti-poverty program claim they are trying to tackle this problem by involving "poor people themselves" in the planning at every level. But will this work when the impetus still comes from the top? Most of the development programs now being projected for Negro communities (and poor white ones) South as well as North are tied to the present power structure either through the federal government or through private foundations which are an integral part of that structure. Can any such program—or any person, no matter how well intentioned, working for that structure—really encourage people to organize to take control of their own destiny? And short of that kind of organization, can people ever win freedom and dignity, or even bread?

It is easy for socialists to resolve this dilemma by simply saying that the answer obviously is socialism, and maybe it is. But to say just that is not enough either. People who advocate socialism need to come up with some specific answers to specific problems the freedom movement faces.

For example, what does socialism suggest as an answer for the Negroes in the Mississippi Delta? In addition to terror from the white man, they face a situation in which agricultural machines do the work now and their manpower is no longer needed; yet if they move to the cities—North, South, East, or West—they are not needed there either. And what about the people in the cities? Nobody likes slums, but nobody likes urban renewal either, for it tears down the slums and puts the people out—and where can they go that is any better? What would a socialist system do in this situation? What would a socialist system do about the growing ghettos of the South—as white people flee to the suburbs and Negroes stay confined in the inner city (as in the North) and the schools resegregate?

Socialists somewhere are probably discussing these questions, but such discussion seldom penetrates civil rights circles. In its 1963 summer issue, *Studies on the Left* published an article entitled "Socialism: The Forbidden Word," by Staughton Lynd, one of the most profound thinkers who is writing about the movement. His

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thesis was that the years of McCarthyism had so stifled discussion in this country that most people feared to talk about socialism or had never heard enough about it to be able to talk about it intelligently. He said that not only the civil rights movement but other social movements were reaching a dead end because of this lack. He proposed that the concepts of socialism be dusted off for normal conversation and given an airing again.

Today the word "socialism" is not quite so forbidden, and one often hears it on the lips of some active young people in the freedom movement. But the years when it was forbidden took their toll. Many who claim they want socialism cannot really define it. They are disgusted with the way things are, they are against the "establishment" that exists—and socialism, somewhat mysterious and still somewhat forbidden fruit, seems like a good thing to be for. This is still not a program, and not the kind of concept that a sustained movement can be built around.

Furthermore, as a result of the years when discussion of socialism was considered almost treason, many intelligent people (including many in the freedom movement) are sincerely convinced that socialist answers cannot be applied without imposition of a new kind of slavery. Those who believe otherwise and advocate socialism need to initiate discussion and debate as to how exactly they propose to establish a socialist system.

One of the healthiest things about the Southern movement, especially the student part of it, is the way in which it has encouraged grass roots leadership and independent thinking on the part of people in the various localities. SNCC organizers, for example, make almost a fetish of their determination not to impose their ideas on a community. Because of fear that the "intellectuals" will control those without formal education, there was even recently a proposal that no one with more than an eighth-grade education be allowed on the SNCC governing body. This didn't pass, but it indicates the mood. With this kind of atmosphere it is utterly unthinkable that any socialist with complete blueprints for the new world could impose his ideas full-blown on the Southern movement.

But what could happen is that more socialist ideas could get into the general atmosphere, more socialist answers to specific problems of the South into discussions large and small. This would surely be all to the good, for it would stimulate discussion of the basic nature of our social order and what needs to be done about it. As and when various ideas on that question permeate the movement, people will take hold of them, refine them, adapt them, make them suit their needs. What finally emerges might very well be some-

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thing new and different from the precise answers of traditional socialism—and it could be better.

No one need think it is going to be smooth sailing to open up free discussion of ideas like socialism. There are many pressures to encourage continued silence. One must look at the last 20 years whole: the anti-Communist hysteria of the postwar period, the investigations, the jailings, the lists, and the restrictive laws were all part of a pattern created by people who do not want things to change and do not want control of society to slip out of their own hands. It was for this that they silenced the country. The Negro revolt, starting in 1955, broke through this silence simply because the craving for freedom could not be stilled. The forces that want to maintain the status quo could not stop this revolt, so they moved to contain it; they have tried to dilute it, divert it, satisfy it with concessions before it forced an overhaul of the entire society.

When he was the Attorney General, Robert Kennedy said a revealing thing during mass demonstrations against segregation in 1963. He said that racial problems in the South were easier to solve than those in the North because the demands were simpler—open public accommodations, etc.—and that these things could be granted and a "valve released." The day when it was that simple has now passed, and the same forces that created a witch hunt 20 years ago can be expected to revive it now—and indeed they are doing so. They cannot undo the last 10 years, they cannot destroy the freedom movement, but they can try to divide it and they are trying. The new attacks on SNCC and the Freedom Democratic Party are part of this. The silence of some supposed liberals in the face of plans by the House Un-American Activities Committee to investigate the Ku Klux Klan along with what they call "extremism" in the civil rights movement (the "plague on both your houses" approach) is another manifestation.

All of this is to be expected. As Jim Forman says, "We are trying to take their power away from them; you expect to be hit in the head." The question is whether enough people will see through the subtle atmosphere of fear created by the banning of words and concepts like socialism, will see the need to break through the fetters this time and bring such concepts out into the open sunlight so that all ideas can be examined, will see the need to look for the causes as well as the effects of second-class citizenship, will see that when you set up forbidden areas of thought you choke off all creative thought and thus surround your movement with a maze of dead-end streets.

There are also internal pressures in the movement that discourage serious consideration of ideas like socialism. The most ac-

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tive and militant people in the South, especially the young people, tend to shy away from big concepts and what they may consider proposals for final answers.

The most committed young people who go into social action today tend to prefer projects where they work closely with a relatively small number of people. They like to teach in a Southern freedom school, or organize councils of the unemployed in a Northern slum. Their object, they will tell you, is to find and develop local leaders, to help these people find themselves and organize to establish their own control over the decisions that affect their lives.

When Howard Zinn told the 1963 SNCC conference that they must face the fact that even the ballot would not give people much power, the solution he offered was to build up what he called "centers of power outside the official political mechanism" able to exert pressure on the social structure, and that is exactly what SNCC has been busy doing. All of this makes for a very healthy grass roots movement. But if you ask the people who are busy building these "pockets of power," as some SNCC people call them, what their ultimate goal is—just what "decisions that affect their lives" the people they are organizing are eventually going to be called on to make—many of them would rather not talk about it.

Partly this results from the organizers' fear that they will try to force their opinions on the people they are working with. It also reflects their rejection of most of the established social reform movements in the country. Young activists who take this position (and there are great numbers of them) tend to have no use for what they call "coalition politics."

The proponents of "coalition politics" within the civil rights movement favor an alliance among the civil rights organizations, labor movement, church and so-called liberal forces to bring economic changes in the country. Bayard Rustin advocates something like this—and some young people who say that contact with Rustin or his ideas was the first radical influence in their lives now consider him a conservative force. SCLC tends to lean in the coalition direction—although some younger people on the SCLC staff reject it, as do many more among SNCC workers. In the view of these people, the groups with which the proposed "coalition" is suggested are themselves a part of the corrupt system and cannot therefore be allies for the building of something new. These young people prefer to start from scratch, with grass roots people who can shape their own forms for political and social change.

Yet many of them, after rejecting the possibility of an alliance with existing groups to work toward broad social goals, go on to reject

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establishing any broad goals of their own. So their refusal to give serious consideration to answers such as socialism reflects also a basic distrust of big solutions. Perhaps they acquired an unconscious sense of caution by hearing tales of an older generation of radicals who staked their lives on a belief in the perfectibility of man under socialism and then were cruelly disillusioned when perfection did not come. Or perhaps they reflect the mood of a generation that has been told so long about how complex is the world they live in that they no longer want to look at it all in a piece. We have here the paradox of a strange sort of cynicism in some of the most idealistic people one can imagine. They seem to feel, although many don't articulate it, that there probably are no big answers to society's problems, and that one must accept this, that the most an individual can do is build something creative and democratic in the corner that he can see and be a part of. This is not the thinking of everyone in the active Southern movement, but it is more prevalent than many people suppose; and it is, to one degree or another, the thinking of most of the people who are working the hardest and sacrificing the most.

One can admire their commitment, one can agree that the building of "pockets of power" is tremendously important. But is it ultimately enough? You can talk about new values and a new society, but some day don't you have to spell out the shape of it?

Is it possible that the moral fire of the freedom movement can yet be merged with a clear vision of a new social order for the nation? Is it possible that the great dream of human dignity can yet be tied to some hard and real understanding of economic systems and what they do to men? Is it possible that the passion of the freedom movement for the development of the individual can yet be combined with an overall plan that can hold a hope of freedom for all people? Is it possible that the determination of the young people to place power on a base of grass roots democracy can be achieved along with a rational economic order? Is it possible that enough people can glimpse such visions to mount a great crusade for them?

It may well be, to paraphrase the poet, that all of this is "not so wild a dream as those who profit by postponing it pretend."

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(*continued from inside front cover*)

are invited to send their contributions to MR. We will use the money to make copies of the issue available at cost price to the Southern Conference Educational Fund and other civil rights organizations.

As we go to press, Leo Huberman is in Cuba to re-establish contact with old friends and bring us up to date on the situation there. Since the September issue is the earliest in which his observations could be published, we decided not to wait that long and to offer instead an article on Cuba to *The Nation*. The article was accepted and is appearing in the issue of July 19. Reprints are being made and will be provided to MR readers on request. Please address your requests to MR, not to *The Nation*.

This double issue (July/August), in accordance with Post Office regulations, carries the single number "3," instead of "3/4" as in the past. Henceforth the final number for each volume will therefore be "11" instead of "12."

Starting with this issue, subscribers will see that the envelope carries a code above or to the right of their names. The date (month and year) shown there is the month and year that your subscription expires. If you will take advantage of this information and renew your subscription *before* it expires, it will be of important financial help to us, as well as assuring you of receiving the magazine without interruption. Please try to notify us of a change in your address six weeks before it goes into effect in order to assure uninterrupted receipt of the magazine. When writing please include your code (month and year your subscription expires).

The Post Office will require that *all* domestic addresses carry the zip code by the end of this year. This, we are informed, will speed delivery. So, if your envelope does not have a zip number, please send it to us on a postcard. Thanks in advance for your cooperation.

There was a regrettable error in the footnote giving historical background material on Guatemala in the May issue, pages 2-3. There it is stated that Arbenz ran against Arévalo in the 1950 presidential election. This is incorrect. Arbenz was the candidate of Arévalo's party and ran with the latter's support.

As we go to press, Felix Greene's brilliant documentary film *China!* is playing to full houses at New York's Carnegie Hall Cinema. See it if you have the chance, and urge theaters in your city to show it if it hasn't yet come your way.

We have just received a letter from Paris signed by Dr. Rafael Alburquerque and Dr. Rafael E. Castán on behalf of the Dominican students resident in Paris saying they would be very grateful if MONTHLY REVIEW would bring the Dominican case to the attention of the protest movements against the war in Vietnam.

Since receiving this communication from Paris, we received a visit from Marcelo Bermudez, representing the Dominican June 14th Movement, who gave us a report on latest conditions in the interior of the Republic. He will be available for speaking engagements. Contact him at Casa Borraquín, 106 East 14th Street, New York, N. Y. 10003.

The only reason we haven't run anything on the Dominican crisis is that the May, June, and July-August issues were all completely planned when the revolution broke out there. We plan to rectify this in the September issue.

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